T. Wall M. D. inv.t T. Ravenet Sculp

When I consider thy Heavens the work of thy fingers, y.e Moon & the Stars which thou hast ordained.— Lord What is Man, that thou art mindfull of him: & the son of man, that thou visitest him.— Psalm 8. V. 3 & 4.— Publish'd May 2. 1748. by J. & J. Rivington.

MEDITATIONS

AND

CONTEMPLATIONS.

In TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

VOL. I.	VOL. II.
MEDITATIONS among the TOMBS.	CONTEMPLATIONS on the NIGHT.
REFLECTIONS on a FLOWER-GARDEN;	CONTEMPLATIONS on the STARRY HEAVENS; And,
And, A DESCANT on CREATION.	A WINTER-PIECE.

By *JAMES HERVEY*, A.B.
Late of *Lincoln-College*, *Oxford*.

The FIFTH EDITION.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
Printed for JOHN and JAMES RIVINGTON, at the *Bible* and *Crown* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*; And J. LEAKE, at *Bath*.

M.DCC.XLIX.

BRITISH MUSEUM
JUL
72

The FRONTISPIECE

Exhibits a View of the nocturnal Heaven.——An Obeliſk, with a Star for its Apex; after the Taſte of the *Egyptians*, ſome of the firſt Students of Aſtronomy. —On the Top of an OBSERVATORY, and leaning on one of the Battlements, a Perſon explores the celeſtial Bodies through a Teleſcope; the Inſtrument, which gave Riſe to the moſt important Improvements of that ſublime Science.

On the oppoſite Side, is a Philoſopher inſtructing his Pupils: He deſcribes, with his Compaſſes, the Order and Courſes of the Planets; according to the *Newtonian* Hypotheſis, intimated by a Book bearing that great Author's Name. — The whole Tenour of the Lecture, in Concert with the whole Structure and Oeconomy of the Skies, ENARRANT GLORIAM DEI, profeſſedly *declare the Glory of GOD*. — Behind the Philoſopher ſtands one of his Scholars, with an Air of deep Attention, computing on his Fingers the Diſtances, the Magnitudes, the Velocities, of the planetary Orbs.—Another, at his Right-hand, attending to the Deſcription of the ſtupen-

dous Syſtem, is impreſſed with Wonder, and with Awe.— Before him ſtoops a Youth, with conſcious Humiliation in his Countenance; and holds a Scroll, inſcribed with a Diagram; expreſſing the joint Action of the *centrifugal* and *centripetal* Forces: as by the One, the Planets are continually endeavouring to fly off; but by the other, are perpetually drawn towards the Centre of their Motion, SIC GRATIA DEI, *Such is the Operation of Divine Grace:* correcting the irregular Impulſe of our natural Depravity: determining our Deſires to the Centre of Happineſs, and directing our Goings in the Circle of Duty.—A Youth in the Middle, overwhelmed with Veneration for the Almighty Maker, in a Tranſport of Gratitude, and a Poſture of profound Adoration, ſeems to pour out his very Soul in thoſe emphatical Words, *When I conſider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained:—Lord, what is Man, that thou art mindful of him; and the Son of Man, that thou viſiteſt him?* Pſal. viii. 3, 4.

TO

TO

PAUL ORCHARD,

OF

Stoke-Abbey, in *Devonſhire*, Eſq;

Dear SIR,

AS your honoured Father was pleaſed to make choice of me, to anſwer in your Name at the Font, and to exerciſe a ſort of Guardianſhip over your ſpiritual Intereſts; permit me, by putting theſe little Treatiſes into your Hand, to fulfil ſome Part of that ſolemn Obligation.

GRATITUDE for many ſignal Favours, and a *conſcientious* Regard to my

ſacred Engagement, have long ago inſpired my Breaſt with the warmeſt Wiſhes, both for *your* true *Dignity*, and real *Happineſs*. Nor can I think of a more endearing, or a more effectual Way, of advancing either the one or the other, than to ſet before you a Sketch of your excellent *Father's Character*.—Illuſtrious Examples are the moſt winning Incitements to Virtue: And none can come attended with ſuch particular Recommendations to YOU, as the Pattern of that worthy Perſon, from whom, under a gracious GOD, you derive your very Being.

A MOST cordial and reverential *Eſteem* for the *Divine Word*, was one of his remarkable Qualities. Thoſe Oracles of Heaven were his principal Delight, and his inſeparable Companions. Your Gardens, your ſolitary Walks, and the Hedges of your Fields, can witneſs, with what an unwearied

wearied Aſſiduity He exerciſed Himſelf in the Law of the LORD. From hence He fetched his Maxims of Wiſdom, and formed his Judgment of Things. The ſacred *Precepts*, were the Model of his Tempers, and the Guide of his Life; while the precious *Promiſes*, were the Joy of his Heart, and his Portion for ever.

IMPROVING Company was another of His moſt reliſhing Pleaſures. Few Gentlemen were better furniſhed, either with Richneſs of Fancy, or Copiouſneſs of Expreſſion, to bear a ſhining Part in Converſation. With theſe Talents He always endeavoured to give ſome uſeful, and generally ſome religious, Turn to the Diſcourſe. Nor did He ever reflect, with greater Complacency, on His ſocial Hours, than when they tended to glorify the eternal Majeſty, and to awaken in Himſelf and others a more lively Spirit of Devotion.

To *project* for the *Good* of *Others*, was His frequent *Study*; and to *carry* thoſe benevolent Contrivances into *Execution*, His favourite *Employ*. When viſited by the young Perſons of the Neighbourhood, far from taking an ungraceful Pride to initiate them in Debauchery, or confirm them in a riotous Habit; it was his inceſſant Aim, by finely-adapted Perſuaſives, to encourage them in Induſtry, and eſtabliſh them in a Courſe of Sobriety; to guard them againſt the Allurements of Vice, and animate them with the Principles of Piety. A noble Kind of Hoſpitality this! which will probably tranſmit it's beneficial Influence to their earthly Poſſeſſions, to their future Families, and even to their everlaſting State.

A CONVICTION of human Indigence, and a thorough Perſuaſion of the Divine All-ſufficiency, induced him to be *frequent*

in

in Prayer. To proſtrate himſelf, in profound Adoration, before that infinitely exalted Being, who dwells in Light inacceſſible, was his Glory; to implore the Continuance of the Almighty Favour, and the Increaſe of all Chriſtian Graces, was his Gain. In thoſe Moments, no doubt, He remembred you, Sir, with a particular Earneſtneſs; and lodged many an ardent Petition in the Court of Heaven, for His infant Son. Ceaſe not to ſecond them with your own devout Supplications, that they may deſcend upon your Head, "in the "Fulneſs of the Bleſſings of the Goſpel of "Peace."

To give their genuine Luſtre to all His other Endowments, He was careful to maintain an *humble Mind.* Though his Friends might admire His ſuperior Abilities, or his Acquaintance applaud His exemplary Behaviour, He ſaw how far He

fell

fell ſhort of the Mark of His high Calling: ſaw, and lamented his Defects: ſaw, and renounced Himſelf; relying, for final Acceptance, and endleſs Felicity, on a better Righteouſneſs than his own; even on the tranſcendently perfect Righteouſneſs, and inconceivably precious Death, of JESUS the Redeemer. This was the Rock of his Hope, and the very Crown of his Rejoicing.

THESE, Sir, are ſome of the diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtics of your deceaſed Parent. And, as you had the Misfortune to loſe ſo valuable a Relative, before you was capable of forming any Acquaintance with his Perſon; I flatter myſelf, you will the more attentively obſerve his Picture. This His *moral Picture*; deſigned, not to be ſet in Gold, or ſparkle in Enamel, but to breathe in your Spirit, and to live in all your Conduct. —Which, though it be intirely

tirely your own, calculated purely for yourſelf, may poſſibly (like the Family-Pieces in your Parlour, that glance an Eye upon as many as enter the Room) make ſome pleaſing and uſeful Impreſſion on every Beholder.—May Every one, charmed with the beautiful Image, catch its Reſemblance; and each, in his reſpective Sphere, "go "and do likewiſe!"

BUT YOU, Sir, are peculiarly concerned to copy the amiable Original. As the Order of an indulgent Providence, has made you Heir of the *affluent Circumſtances*; let not a gay and thoughtleſs Inadvertence, cut you off from the *richer Inheritance*, of theſe noble Qualifications.—Theſe will be your Security, amidſt all the glittering Dangers; which are inſeparable from blooming Years, and an elevated Situation in Life. Theſe are your Path, your ſure and only Path, to true Greatneſs, and ſolid Happineſs.——

Tread

Tread in theſe Steps, and you cannot fail of being the Darling of your Friends, and the Favourite of Heaven. Tread in theſe Steps, and you will give inexpreſſible Joy to one of the beſt of Mothers; you will become an extenſive Bleſſing to your Fellow-Creatures; and, which, after ſuch moſt engaging Motives, is ſcarce worthy to be mentioned, you will be the Delight, the Honour, and the Boaſt, of,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt affectionate Godfather,

And faithful Humble Servant,

Weſton-Favell, *near*
Northampton,
July 14. 1747.

JAMES HERVEY.

PREFACE.

WE *have already exerciſed our Speculations, on the Tombs, and Flowers; ſurveying Nature, covered with the* deepeſt *Horrors, and arrayed in the* richeſt *Beauties.* Allegory *taught many of the Objects, to ſpeak the Language of Virtue; while* Imagination *lent her Colouring, to give the Leſſons an engaging Air.——And this, with a View of imitating that* divine Inſtructor; *who commiſſioned the* Lily *, *in her Silver Suit, to remonſtrate in the Ear of unbelieving Reaſon: Who ſent his Diſciples (Men ordained to* teach *the Univerſe) to* learn *Maxims of the laſt Importance, from the moſt* inſignificant *Birds *, that*

* * Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

wander

wander *through the Paths of the Air*; *from the very* meaneſt *Herbs* *, *that are* ſcattered *over the Face of the* † *Ground.*

Imboldened by the kind Acceptance of the preceding Sketches, I beg Leave to confide in the ſame Benevolence *of* Taſte, *for the Protection and Support of the two remaining Eſſays; which exhibit a Proſpect of* ſtill Life, *and* grand Operation: *which moralize on the moſt compoſed, and moſt magnificent, Appearances of Things.——In which,* Fancy *is again ſuffered to introduce her Imagery; but only as the Handmaid of* Truth: *in*

* Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

† Celebrated Writers, as *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero*, *Thucydides* and *Livy*, are obſerv'd to have a Style peculiar to themſelves—Now, whoever conſiders the Diſcourſes of *Chriſt*, will find a Style by which he *remarkably* diſtinguiſhes himſelf, and which may *properly* be called *HIS OWN.* Majeſtic, yet familiar; happily uniting Dignity with Condeſcenſion; it conſiſts, in Teaching his Followers the *ſublimeſt Truths*, by ſpiritualizing on the moſt *common Occurrences*: Which, beſides its being level to the loweſt Apprehenſions; and admirably adapted to ſteal into the moſt inattentive Heart; is accompanied with this very ſingular Advantage, That it turns even the *Sphere of Buſineſs* into a *School of Inſtruction*; and renders the moſt ordinary Objects a Set of Monitors, ever ſoliciting our Regard, becauſe ever preſent to our Senſes.—So that, I believe, it may be ſaid of this *amiable Method*, in which our LORD conveyed; as well

in order to dreſs her Perſon, and diſplay her Charms; to engage the Attention, and win the Love, even of the Gay, *and of the* Faſhionable. *Which is more likely to be effected, by forming agreeable Pictures of Nature, and deriving inſtructive Obſervations; than by the laborious Method of long-deduced Arguments, or cloſe-connected Reaſonings.——The Contemplation of the Heavens and the Earth, of their admirable Properties, and beneficial Changes, has always afforded the moſt exalted Gratification to the human Mind. In Compliance with this prevailing Taſte, I have*

well as of that *powerful Energy*, which attended his Doctrines; That *never Man ſpake like this Man.*—The *Harveſt* approaching, He reminds his Diſciples of a far more important Harveſt, *John* iv. 35. *Mat.* xiii. 39. when immortal Beings ſhall be *reaped* from the Grave, and *gathered in* from all the Quarters of the Earth: when every human Creature ſhall ſuſtain the Character of valuable *Wheat*, or deſpicable *Tares*; and accordingly be lodged in Manſions of everlaſting Security, or conſigned over to the Rage of unquenchable Fire. —In his Charge to *Fiſhermen*, when they are commencing Preachers, *Mat.* iv. 19. He exhorts them, conformably to the Nature of their late Occupation, to uſe the ſame *Aſſiduity* and *Addreſs* in winning Souls, as they were wont to exerciſe in catching the finny Prey.—But, for a *further* Illuſtration of this no leſs *uſeful*, than *curious* Subject, I would refer my Reader to a moſt valuable Note, in Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Obſervations on the Prophecies; p. 148. 4to Edition.

drawn

drawn my ſerious Admonitions from the ſtupendous Theatre, and variegated Scenery, of the Univerſe. That the Reader may learn his Duty, from his very Pleaſure:——may gather Wiſdom, *mingled with* Virtue, *from the moſt refined* Entertainments, *and nobleſt* Delights.

The Evening, *drawing her Sables over the World, and gently darkening into* Night, *is a Seaſon peculiarly proper for ſedate Conſideration. All Circumſtances concur, to huſh our Paſſions, and ſooth our Cares; to tempt our Steps abroad, and prompt our Thoughts to ſerious Reflection.*

—— —— —— Then is the Time,
For thoſe, whom Wiſdom, and whom Nature charm,
To ſteal themſelves from the degen'rate Croud,
And ſoar above this little Scene of Things;
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their Feet;
To ſooth the throbbing Paſſions into Peace;
And woo lone Quiet in her ſilent Walks *.

The Favour I would ſolicit for the firſt of the following Compoſitions, is, That it may be per-

* Thomſ. Autumn, l. 973. laſt Edit. 12mo.

mitted

mitted to attend, in ſuch retired and contemplative Excurſions. To attend, if not under the Character of a Friend; at leaſt, in the humble Capacity of a Servant, or a Page: ——*as a* Servant, *to* open *the* Door *of Meditation, and* remove *every* Impediment *to thoſe beſt Exerciſes of the Mind; which blend Advantage with Amuſement, and improve, while they delight:* — *as a* Page, *to* gather up *the unſtable, fluctuating* Train *of Fancy; and collect her fickle Powers into a conſiſtent, regular, and uſeful Habit of Thinking.*

The other, *converſant among the* ſtarry Regions, *would lead the Imagination through thoſe beautiful Tracts of unclouded Azure; and point out to the Judgment ſome of thoſe aſtoniſhing Particulars, which ſo eminently ſignalize the celeſtial Worlds. A Proſpect this, to which Curioſity attracts our Eyes, and to which Scripture itſelf often directs our Study. A Proſpect, of all others moſt excellently calculated, to* enlarge *the Soul, and* ennoble *it's Conceptions;* —— *to give the higheſt Apprehenſions of the* everlaſting *GOD, and create Sentiments of becoming Superiority, with relation to all* tranſitory *Intereſts;* ———*in a Word, to furniſh* Faith *with the firmeſt Foundation, for a ſteady Affiance, and true Magnani-*

mity of Spirit; to afford Piety *the ſtrongeſt Motives, both for a lively Gratitude, and profound Veneration.*

While Galilæo *lifts his Tube, and diſcovers the prodigious Magnitude of thoſe radiant Orbs;* ——*while* Newton *meaſures their amazing Diſtances, and unites the whole Syſtem, in harmonious Order, by the ſubtle Influences of Attraction:*——*I would only, like the Herald before that illuſtrious* Hebrew *, proclaim at every Turn,* " Bow the Knee, *and adore the Almighty Ma-* " *ker; magnify his eternal Name,* and make his " Praiſe, *like all his Works,* to be glorious."

* Gen. xli. 43.

CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS
ON THE
NIGHT.

Night *is fair* Virtue's *immemorial Friend:*
The conſcious Moon, *through every diſtant Age,*
Has held a Lamp to Wiſdom.

Night-Thoughts, N° V.

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CONTEMPLATIONS
ON THE
NIGHT.

THE Buſineſs of the Day diſpatched, and the ſultry Heats abated, invited me to the Recreation of a *Walk*: A Walk in one of the *fineſt Receſſes* of the Country; and in one of the moſt *pleaſant Evenings*, which the Summer-Seaſon produced.

THE Limes and Elms, uniting their Branches over my Head, formed a *verdant Canopy*, and caſt a moſt refreſhing Shade. Under my Feet lay a *Carpet* of Nature's *Velvet*; Graſs intermingled with Moſs, and embroidered with Flowers. Jeſſamines, in Conjunction with Woodbines, twined around the Trees; diſplaying their *artleſs Beauties* to the Eye, and diffuſing

ſuſing their *delicious Sweets* through the Air. On either Side, the Boughs, rounded into a Set of regular Arches, opened a View into the *diſtant Fields*, and preſented me with a Proſpect of the *bending Skies*. The little Birds, all joyous and grateful for the Favours of the Light, were paying their Acknowledgments in a *Tribute* of *Harmony*, and ſoothing themſelves to Reſt with Songs. While a French-Horn, from a neighbouring Seat, ſent its melodious Accents, ſoftened by the Length of their Paſſage, to complete the *Concert* of the *Grove*.

ROVING in this moſt agreeable Manner, my Thoughts were exerciſed on a Subject, more delightful than the Seaſon, or the Scene. I mean, our late *ſignal Victory* over the united Forces of *inteſtine Treaſon*, and *foreign Invaſion*. A Victory, which pours Joy through the preſent Age, and will tranſmit its Influence to Generations yet unborn.——Are not all the Bleſſings, which can indear Society, or render Life itſelf deſirable, centered in our preſent *happy Conſtitution*, and *auſpicious Government?* And were they not *all* ſtruck at, by that impious and horrid Blow, meditated at *Rome*; levelled by *France*; and ſeconded by factious Spirits at *Home?* Who then can be ſufficiently thankful, for the gracious Interpoſition of Providence; which has not only averted the impending

impending Ruin, but turned it, with aggravated Confuſion, on the Authors of our Troubles?

METHINKS, every Thing *valuable*, which I poſſeſs; every Thing *charming*, which I behold; conſpire to enhance this ever-memorable Event. To this it is owing, that I can ramble unmoleſted along the Vale of *private Life*, and taſte all the innocent Satisfactions of a *contemplative Retirement*.—Had Rebellion * ſucceeded in her deteſtable Deſigns; inſtead of walking with *Security* and *Complacence* in theſe flowery Paths, I might have met the *Aſſaſſin* with his *Dagger*: or have been obliged to provide for my Safety, by abandoning my Habitation. — Farewel then, ye fragrant Shades; Seats of Meditation, and calm Repoſe! I ſhould have been driven from your *loved Retreats*, to make Way for ſome *inſulting Victor*. —Farewel then, ye pleaſing Toils, and wholſome Amuſements of my rural Hours! I ſhould no more have reared the tender *Flower* to the Sun; no more have taught the *Eſpalier* to expand her Boughs; nor have fetched, any longer, from my *Kitchen-Garden*, the pureſt Supplies of Health.

HAD Rebellion ſucceeded in her deteſtable Deſigns; inſtead of being regaled with the *Muſic*

* Referring to the Rebellion, ſet on Foot in the Year 1745 — which, for ſeveral Months, made a very alarming Progreſs in the *North* — but was happily extinguiſhed by the glorious and deciſive Victory at *Culloden*.

of the *Woods*, I might have been alarmed with the Sound of the Trumpet, and all the Thunder of War. Inſtead of being entertained with this *beautiful Landſchape*, I might have beheld our Houſes ranſacked, and our Villages plundered; I might have beheld our fenced Cities encompaſſed with Armies, and our fruitful Fields "cloathed with Deſolation;" or have been ſhocked with the ſtill more frightful Images, of "Garments rolled in Blood," and of a Ruffian's Blade reeking from a Brother's Heart. Inſtead of *Peace*, with her chearing Olives, ſheltering our Abodes; inſtead of *Juſtice*, with her impartial Scale, ſecuring our Goods; *Perſecution* had brandiſhed her Sword, and *Slavery* clanked her Chains.

NOR are theſe Miſeries *imaginary* only, or the Creatures of a groundleſs Panic. There are, in a neighbouring Kingdom, who very lately *experienced* them in all their Rigour *. And, if the *malignant* Spirit of *Popery*, had forced itſelf into our Church; if an *abjured Pretender*, had cut his Way to our Throne; We could have no Reaſon

* See a Pamphlet intituled, *Popery always the ſame.*—Which contains a Narrative of the *Perſecutions*, and ſevere Hardſhips, lately ſuffered by the *Proteſtants*, in the ſouthern Parts of *France*; and cloſes with a moſt *ſeaſonable*, *alarming*, and *ſpirited Addreſs* to the Inhabitants of *Great Britain*. Printed 1746. Price 8*d*.

Reaſon to expect a Mitigation of their Severity, on our Behalf.—But, ſuppoſing the *tender Mercies* of a bigotted Uſurper, to have been ſomewhat leſs *cruel*; yet where, alas! would have been the *Encouragement*, to cultivate our little Portion; or what *Pleaſure* could ariſe, from an improved Spot; if both the one and the other lay, every Moment, at the Mercy of *lawleſs Power?* This imbittering Circumſtance would ſpoil their Reliſh; and by rendering them a *precarious*, would render them a *joyleſs* Acquiſition. —In vain, might the *Vine* ſpread her purple Cluſters; in vain, be laviſh of her generous Juices; if *Tyranny*, like a ravenous Harpy, ſhould be always hovering over the Bowl, and ready to ſnatch it from the Lip of *Induſtry*.

LIBERTY, that deareſt of Names; and *Property*, that beſt of Charters; give an additional, an inexpreſſible Charm, to every delightful Object.—See, how the declining Sun has beautified the *weſtern Clouds*, has arrayed them in Crimſon, and ſkirted them with Gold. Such a Refinement of our *domeſtic Bliſs*, is Property; ſuch an Improvement of our *public Privileges*, is Liberty.—When the Lamp of Day ſhall intirely withdraw his Beams, there will ſtill remain the ſame Collection of floating Vapours; but O! how changed, how gloomy! The Carnation bluſhes no more; the golden Edgings are gone;

and all the *lovely Tinges* are loſt, in a *leaden-coloured louring* Sadneſs. *Such* would be the Aſpect, of all theſe Scenes of Beauty; all theſe Abodes of Pleaſure; if expoſed continually to the Caprice of *arbitrary Sway*, or held in a State of abject and *cringing Dependence*.

THE Light of Heaven has almoſt finiſhed his daily Race, and haſtens to the Goal. He deſcends lower and lower; till his Chariot-wheels ſeem to hover on the utmoſt Verge of Day. And, what is ſomewhat remarkable, his *Orb*, upon the Point of ſetting, grows *broader*: The *Shadows*, juſt before they are loſt in undiſtinguiſhed Darkneſs, are ſurpriſingly *lengthened* *. ——Like *Bleſſings*, little prized, while *poſſeſſed*: but highly eſteemed, the very Inſtant they are *preparing* for their *Flight*; bitterly regretted, when once they are *gone*, and to be ſeen no more.

THE radiant Globe is, now, half immerſed beneath the duſky Earth. He is taking his Leave of our Hemiſphere, and gilds the Plains with a languid Luſtre. ——But, could I view the *Sea*, at this Juncture, it would yield a moſt amuſing and curious Spectacle. The Rays, ſtriking horizontally on the liquid Element, give it the Appearance of floating Glaſs: or, reflected in many a dif-

* *Majoreſque cadunt altis de Montibus Umbræ.*
VIRG.

a different Direction, form a beautiful Multiplicity of Colours.—A *Stranger*, as he walks along the ſandy Beach; and, loſt in penſive Attention, liſtens to the Murmurings of the reſtleſs Flood; is agreeably alarmed by the *gay Decorations* of the Surface. With Entertainment, and with Wonder, he ſees the curling Waves, here gliſtering with White, there glowing with Purple; in one Place, wearing an azure Tincture; in another, glancing a Caſt of undulating Green; in the whole, exhibiting a Piece of *fluid Scenery*, that may vie with yonder penſil Tapeſtries, though wrought in the Loom, and tinged with the Dyes of Heaven.

BUT, while I am tranſported by Fancy to the Shores of the Ocean, the great Luminary is ſunk beneath the Horizon, and totally diſappears. The whole Face of the Ground is overſpread with Shades; or with, what one of the fineſt Painters of Nature calls, a *dun Obſcurity*. Only a few very ſuperior Eminencies are tipt with ſtreaming Silver. The Tops of Groves, and lofty Towers, catch the *laſt Smiles* of Day *; are ſtill irradiated by the departing Beams.—But

* See this remarkable Appearance delicately deſcribed, and wrought into a Compariſon, which, in my Opinion, is one of the moſt juſt, beautiful, and noble Pieces of Imagery, to be found in modern Poetry.

Night-Thoughts, N°. II. p. 42. 4to Edit.

oh! how tranſient is the Diſtinction! how momentary the Giſt! Like all the Bleſſings, which Mortals enjoy below, it is *gone*, almoſt as ſoon as *granted*. See! how languiſhingly it trembles on the leafy Spire; and glimmers, with a dying Faintneſs on the Mountain's Brow. The little Vivacity, that remains, decays every Moment. It can no longer hold its Station. While I ſpeak, it expires; and reſigns the World to the gradual Approaches of Night.

——— *Now* Twilight *grey*
Has in her ſober Liv'ry *all Things clad* *.

EVERY Object, a little while ago, glared with Light; but now, All appears under a more qualified Luſtre. The Animals harmonize with the inſenſible Creation; and what was *gay* in thoſe, as well as *glittering* in this, gives place to an univerſal *Gravity*. In the *Meadows*, all was jocund and ſportive: but now the gameſome Lambs, are grown weary of their Frolicks; and the tired Shepherd, has impoſed Silence on his Pipe. In the *Branches*, all was Sprightlineſs and Song: but now the lively Green, is wrapt in the deſcending Glooms, and no tuneful Airs are heard, but only the plaintive Stock-dove, cooing mournfully through the Grove.—Should I now be vain and trifling, the Heavens and the Earth would rebuke my unſeaſonable Levity. Therefore,

* MILT. *Par. Loſt*, B. iv. l. 598.

fore, be theſe Moments devoted to Thoughts, *ſedate*, as the cloſing Day; *ſolemn*, as the Face of Things. And, indeed, however my ſocial Hours are enlivened with *innocent Pleaſantry*; let every Evening, in her ſable Habit, toll the Bell to *ſerious Conſideration*. Nothing can be more proper for a Creature that borders upon Eternity, and is haſting continually to his final Audit; than daily to ſlip away from the Circle of Amuſements, and frequently to relinquiſh the Hurry of Buſineſs, in order to conſider and adjuſt "the "Things that belong to his Peace."

SINCE the Sun is departed, from whence can it proceed, that I am not involved in *pitchy Darkneſs?* Whence, theſe Remainders of *diminiſhed Brightneſs?* which, though ſcarcely forming a Refulgence, yet ſmooth the rugged Brow of Night. I ſee not the ſhining Orb, and yet am cheared with a Portion of his ſoftened Splendors. —— Does he remember Us, in his Progreſs through other Climes; and ſend a *Detachment* of his Rays to *eſcort* Us in our further Motions; or *cover* (if I may uſe the military Term) our *Retreat* from the Scene of Action? Has He bequeathed Us a Dividend of his Beams, ſufficient to render our Circumſtances eaſy, and our Situation agreeable? till Sleep pours its ſoft Oppreſſion on the Organs of Senſe; till Sleep

ſuſpends

ſuſpends all the Operations of our Hands; and intirely ſuperſedes any more Occaſion for the Light.

No: it is ill judged and unreaſonable, to aſcribe this beneficent Conduct to the *Sun*. Not unto *Him*; not unto *Him*; but unto his *Almighty Maker* We are obliged, for this noble Preſent, this valuable Legacy. The gracious Author of our Being, has ſo diſpoſed the Collection of circumambient Air, as to make it productive of this fine and beneficial Effect. The Sun-beams, falling on the higher Parts of the aerial Fluid, inſtead of paſſing on in ſtrait Lines, are bent inward, and inflected to our Sight. Their natural Courſe is over-ruled, and they are bidden to wheel about; on purpoſe, to favour Us with a welcome and ſalutary Viſit.—By which means, the Bleſſing of Light, and the Seaſon of Buſineſs, are conſiderably prolonged. And, what is a very endearing Circumſtance, prolonged moſt conſiderably; when the vehement Heats of Summer, incline the *Student* to poſtpone his Walk, till the temperate Evening prevails; when the important Labours of the Harveſt, call the *Huſbandman* abroad, before the Day is fully riſen.

AFTER all the Ardors of the ſultry Day, how reviving is this *Coolneſs!*—This gives new *Verdure* to the fading Plants; new *Vivacity* to the

the withering Flowers; and a more exquiſite *Fragrancy* to their mingled Scents.—By this, the *Air* alſo receives a new Force, and is qualified to exert itſelf with greater Activity: to brace our Limbs; to heave our Lungs; and co-operate, with a briſker Impulſe, in perpetuating the Circulation of our Blood.—This I might call the grand *Alembic* of *Nature*; which diſtils her moſt ſovereign *Cordial*, the refreſhing *Dews*. *Inceſſant Heat*, would deſtroy the pearly Drops; or oblige them to evaporate, in imperceptible Exhalations. *Turbulent Winds*, or even the gentler Motions of *Aurora*'s Fan, would diſſipate the riſing Vapours, and not ſuffer them to come to a Coalition. But, favoured by the Stilneſs; and condenſed by the Coolneſs of the Night; they form that *finely-tempered Humidity*, which chears the vegetable World, as Sleep exhilarates the animal.

SUCH are the Advantages of *Solitude*. The World is a troubled Ocean; and who can erect ſtable Purpoſes, on its fluctuating Waves? The World is a School of Wrong; and Who does not feel Himſelf warping, to its pernicious Influences *? On this *Sea* of *Glaſs* †, how inſenſibly we *ſlide* from our *Stedfaſtneſs!* Some *ſacred Truth*,

* *Nunquam a turba mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid, ex eo quod compoſui, turbatur: aliquid, ex his quæ fugavi, redit. Inimica eſt multorum converſatio.* Senec.

† Rev. xv. 2.

Truth, which was ſtruck in lively Characters on our Souls, is obſcured, if not obliterated. Some *noble Reſolution*, which Heaven had wrought in our Breaſts, is ſhaken, if not overthrown. Some *inticing Vanity*, which we had ſolemnly renounced, again practiſes it's Charms, and again captivates our Affections. How often has an unwary Glance, kindled a Fever of irregular Deſire in our Hearts? How often has a Word of Applauſe, dropt luſcious Poiſon into our Ears; or ſome diſreſpectful Expreſſion, raiſed a Guſt of Paſſion in our Boſms? Our Innocence is of ſo *tender* a *Conſtitution*, that it ſuffers in the promiſcuous Croud; our Purity of ſo *delicate* a *Complexion*, that it ſcarce touches on the World, without contracting a Stain. We ſee, we hear, with *Peril*.

BUT here *Safety* dwells. Every meddling and intruſive Avocation is ſecluded. Silence holds the Door againſt the Strife of Tongues, and all the Impertinencies of idle Converſation. The buſy Swarm of vain Images, and cajoling Temptations; that beſet Us, with a buzzing Importunity, amidſt the Gaieties of Life; are chaſed by theſe thickening Shades.—Here I may, without Diſturbance, commune with my own Heart; and learn that *beſt* of *Sciences*, to *know myſelf*. Here the Soul may rally her diſſipated Powers, and Grace recover its native Energy. — This is the

Opportunity,

Opportunity, to rectify the evil Impreſſions, and expel the Contagion, of corrupting Examples. This is the Place, where I may, with Advantage, apply myſelf to ſubdue the *Rebel within*; and be Maſter, not of a *Sceptre*, but of *myſelf*. —Throng then, ye Ambitious, the *Levees* of the Powerful; I will be punctual in my *Aſſignations* with Solitude. To a Mind intent upon it's own Improvement, Solitude has Charms incomparably more engaging, than the *Entertainments* preſented in the *Theatre*; or the *Honours* conferred in the *Drawing-Room*.

I SAID Solitude. — But am I then *alone?* — 'Tis true, my Acquaintance are at a Diſtance. I have ſtole away from Company, and am remote from all *human* Obſervation.—But that is an alarming Thought,

> Millions *of* ſpiritual Creatures *walk the Earth*,
> Unſeen, *both when we wake, and when we ſleep* *.

PERHAPS, there may be Numbers of thoſe *inviſible Beings*, patrolling this ſame Retreat; and joining with me, in contemplating the Creator's Works. Perhaps thoſe *miniſtring Spirits*, who rejoice at the Converſion of a Sinner, and hold up the Goings of the Righteous, may follow Us to

* MILT. *Par. Loſt*, B. iv. l. 677.

to the lonely Receſs; and, even in our moſt *ſolitary* Moments, be our conſtant *Attendants*.—What a pleaſing Awe is awakened, by ſuch a Reflection! How *venerable* it renders my *retired* Walk! I am ſtruck with Reverence, as under the Roof of ſome *ſacred Edifice*; or in the *Preſence-Chamber* of ſome mighty Monarch.—O! may I never bring any Pride of Imagination, nor indulge the leaſt diſſolute Affection; where ſuch refined and exalted Intelligencies exerciſe their Watch.

'TIS *poſſible*, that I am encompaſſed with ſuch a Cloud of Witneſſes; but it is *certain*, that GOD, the *infinite* and *eternal* GOD, is ever with me. The great JEHOVAH, before whom all the Angelic Armies bow their Heads, and veil their Faces, ſurrounds me; ſupports me; pervades me. "In HIM I live, move, and have my Be-"ing." The whole World is his *auguſt Temple*; and, in the moſt *ſequeſtered Corner*, I appear before his adorable Majeſty, no leſs than when I worſhip in his Houſe, or kneel at his Altar. In every Place, therefore, let me pay him the Homage of a Heart, cleanſed from Idols, and devoted to his Service. In every Circumſtance, let me feel no *Ambition*, but to *pleaſe* Him; nor covet any *Happineſs*, but to *enjoy* Him.

How ſublime is the Deſcription, and how ſtriking the Sentiment, in that noble Paſſage of the

the Pſalms, *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit, or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I climb up into* the Heights of *Heaven, Thou art there* inthroned in Light. *If I go down to the* Depths of the *Grave, Thou art there alſo* in thy Pavilion of Darkneſs. *If I retire* to the remoteſt Eaſtern Climes, *where the Morning firſt takes Wing: if,* ſwifter than the darting Ray, *I* paſs to the oppoſite Regions of the Weſt, and *remain in the uttermoſt Parts of the Sea* * : ſhall I, in *that* diſtant Situation, be beyond thy Reach; or, by *this* ſudden Tranſition, eſcape thy Notice? So far from it; that could I, with one Glance of Thought, tranſport myſelf beyond all the Bounds of Creation; I ſhould ſtill be incircled with the *Immenſity* of thy *Eſſence*; or rather, ſtill be incloſed in the *Hollow* of thy *Hand.* Important and delightful Truth! Let it be interwoven with every Thought! and become one with the very Conſciouſneſs of my Exiſtence! that I may continually *walk with GOD,* and conduct myſelf, in every Step of my Behaviour, "as *ſeeing* "*HIM that is inviſible.*"

THEY

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THEY are the happy Perſons; *Felicity*, true Felicity, is *all their own*; who live under an habitual Senſe of GOD's Omnipreſence, and a ſweet Perſuaſion of his ſpecial Love. If Dangers threaten, their impregnable Defence is at hand; nothing can be ſo near to terrify, as their Almighty Guardian to ſecure them.—To Theſe, the Hours can never be *tedious*; and it is impoſſible, for them, to be *alone*. Do they ſtep aſide from the *Occupations* of animal Life? A more exalted Set of Employments engage their Attention. They addreſs themſelves, in all the *various Acts* of Devotion, to their heavenly Father; *who* now *ſees in ſecret, and will* hereafter *reward them openly*. They ſpread all their Wants, before his indulgent Eye; and diſburden all their Sorrows, into his compaſſionate Boſom.—Do they withdraw from *human Society?* They find themſelves under the more immediate Regards of their Maker. If they reſign the Satisfactions of ſocial Intercourſe; it is to cultivate a Correſpondence with the condeſcending DEITY, and taſte the Pleaſures of *Divine Friendſhip*.—What is ſuch a *State*, but the very Suburbs of Heaven? What is ſuch a *Conduct*, but an Antepaſt of eternal Bleſſedneſs?

NOW, my Soul, the *Day is ended*. The Hours are all fled: They are fled to the ſupreme Judge,

Judge, and have given in their Evidence. An Evidence, regiſtered in Heaven; and to be produced, at the great Audit.—Happy *They!* whoſe Improvement has kept pace with the paſſing Minutes. Who have ſeized them as they advanced; and engaged them in the *Purſuit* of *Wiſdom*, or the *Service* of *Virtue*.

How is the Day gone, almoſt as ſoon as it dawned!——The ſilent Moments ſlip away *inſenſibly*. No Thief ſteals more unperceived from the pillaged Houſe. Where-ever we are, however employed, Time purſues his inceſſant Courſe. Though *we* are liſtleſs and dilatory; the *great Meaſurer* of our *Days* preſſes on; ſtill preſſes on, in his unwearied Career; and whirls our Weeks, and Months, and Years away.——Is it not then ſurpriſingly ſtrange, to hear People complain of the *Tedioufneſs* of their Time, and how *heavy* it hangs upon their Hands? To ſee them contriving a Variety of amuſing Artifices, to accelerate it's Flight, and get rid of it's Burden?—Ah! thoughtleſs Mortals! Why need you urge the headlong Torrent? Your Days are *ſwifter* than a *Poſt*; which, carrying Diſpatches of the laſt Importance, with unremitted Speed ſcours the Road. They paſs away like the *nimble Ships*; which have the Wind in their Wings, and ſkim along the watry Plain. They haſten to their deſtined Period, with the *Rapidity* of an *Eagle*;

which leaves the ſtormy Blaſt behind Her, while She cleaves the Air, and darts upon her Prey *.

AND now it is gone, how *ſhort* it appears! When my fond Eye beheld it in *Perſpective*, it ſeemed a very conſiderable Space. Minutes, crouded upon Minutes; and Hours, ranged behind Hours; exhibited an extenſive Plan, and flattered me with a long Progreſſion of Pleaſures. But, upon a *retroſpective* View, how wonderfully is the Scene altered? The Landſchape, large and ſpacious, which a *warm Fancy* drew; brought to the Teſt of *cool Experience*, ſhrinks into a Span. Juſt as the Shores vaniſh, and Mountains dwindle to a Spot; when the Sailor, ſurrounded by Skies and Ocean, throws his laſt Look on his native Land.——How clearly do I now diſcover the Cheat! May it never impoſe upon my unwary Imagination again! I find, there is nothing abiding on this Side Eternity. A *long* Duration,

* *Job* ix. 25, 26. By theſe Three very expreſſive Images, the inſpired Poet repreſents the *unintermitted* and *rapid* Flight of *Time*. The Paſſage is illuſtrated with great Judgment, and equal Delicacy, in Dr. *Grey*'s moſt ingenious Abridgment of *Schultens*.—*Quæ tribus in elementis velociſſima, hic admirabili cum emphaſi congeruntur. In terris, nil pernicius curſore, & quidem læti quid ferente. Rapidius tamen adhuc undas, non ſecant, ſed ſupervolant, navigiola papyro contexta. Omnium rapidiſſime aerem grandibus alis permetitur aquila, præcipiti lapſu ruens in prædam.*

ration, in a State of *finite* Exiſtence, is *mere Illuſion.*

PERHAPS, the *Healthy*, and the *Gay*, may not readily credit the ſerious Truth; eſpecially from a young Pen, and new to it's Employ. Let us then refer ourſelves to the Deciſion of the *Antient.* Aſk ſome venerable old Perſon, that is juſt marching off the mortal Stage; *How many have been the Days of the Years of thy Life* * ? It was a Monarch's Queſtion; and therefore can want no Recommendation, to the faſhionable World.—Obſerve, how He ſhakes his hoary Locks, and from a deep-felt Conviction replies; "*Fourſcore Years* have finiſhed their Rounds, "to furrow theſe Cheeks, and cloathe this Head "in Snow. Such a Term may ſeem long and "large, to inconſiderate Youth. But Oh! how "ſhort, how ſcanty, to One that has made the "Experiment! *Short*, as a *Gleam* of tranſient "Sunſhine; *ſcanty*, 'as the *Shadow* that de-"parteth.' Methinks, it was but Yeſterday, "that I exchanged my childiſh Sports, for "manly Exerciſes; and now I am reſigning "them both, for the Sleep of Death. As ſoon "as we are *born*, we begin to draw to our "*End*; and how ſmall is the Interval, between "the Cradle and the Tomb!"——O! may we believe this Teſtimony of mature Age! May

* Gen. xlvii. 8.

every Evening bring it, with clearer Evidence, to our Minds! And may we form ſuch an Eſtimate of the *little Pittance*, while it is upon the *advancing* Hand; as we ſhall certainly make, when the Sands are all *run down!*

LET me add one Reflection on the *Work* to be *done*, while this Shuttle is flying through the Loom. A Work of no ſmall Difficulty, and yet of the utmoſt Conſequence.—Haſt Thou not ſeen, haſt Thou not heard of, the *Excellent* of the *Earth*; who were living Images of their Maker? His *Divine Likeneſs* was transfuſed into their Hearts, and beamed forth in all their Conduct. Beamed forth in the *Meekneſs* of *Wiſdom*, and *Purity* of *Affection*; in all the *tender Offices* of Love, and all the *noble Efforts* of Zeal. To be ſtampt with the ſame beautiful Signature, and to be Followers of Them, as They were of CHRIST; *this*, *this* is thy *Buſineſs*. On the Accompliſhment of this, thy eternal All depends. And, will an Affair of ſuch unſpeakable Weight, admit of a Moment's Delay, or conſiſt with the leaſt Remiſſneſs?—Eſpecially, ſince much of thy appointed Time is already elapſed; and the Remainder is *all Uncertainty*, ſave only that it is in the very Act to fly.—Or ſuppoſe, thou hadſt made a *Covenant* with the Grave, and waſt aſſured of reaching the Age of *Methuſelah*; how ſoon would even *ſuch* a *Leaſe* expire!—Extend

it,

it, if you pleaſe, ſtill farther, and let it be *co-exiſtent* with *Nature* itſelf: Yet, how ſpeedily will the Conſummation of all Things commence! For, yet a very little while, and the commiſſioned Archangel lifts up his Hand to Heaven, and ſwears by the Almighty Name, *That Time ſhall be na longer* *. Then, *abuſed* Opportunities will never return; and *new* Opportunities

* This alludes to the Beginning of *Revelations* the xth; which, abſtracted from its ſpiritual Meaning, and conſidered only as a ſtately *Piece* of *Machinery*, well deſerves our Attention; and, I will venture to ſay, has not it's *Superior*, perhaps not it's *Equal*, in any of the moſt celebrated Maſters of *Greece* and *Rome*.—All that is gloomy or beautiful in the Atmoſphere, all that is ſtriking or magnificent in every Element, is taken in to heighten the Idea. Yet nothing is diſproportionate; but an uniform Air of ineffable Majeſty greatens, exalts, ennobles the Whole.—Be pleaſed to obſerve the *Aſpect* of this auguſt Perſonage. All the Brightneſs of the Sun, ſhines in his Countenance; and all the Rage of the Fire, burns in his Feet——See his *Apparel*. The Clouds compoſe his Robe, and the Drapery of the Sky floats upon his Shoulders. The Rainbow forms his Diadem; and that which "compaſſeth the Hea-"ven with a glorious Circle," is the Ornament of his Head.—Behold his *Attitude*. One Foot ſtands on the Ocean, and the other reſts on the Land. The wide-extended Earth, and the World of Waters, ſerve as Pedeſtals for thoſe mighty Columns. —Conſider the *Action*. His Hand is lifted up to the Height of the Stars. He ſpeaks; and the Regions of the Firmament echo with the mighty Ac-

 cents,

ties will never more be offered. Then, ſhould negligent Mortals wiſh, ever ſo paſſionately, for a few Hours;—a *few Moments* only;—to be thrown back from the opening Eternity; *Thouſands of Worlds* would not be able to procure the Grant.

SHALL I, now, be induſtrious to *ſhorten*, what is no longer than a *Span*; or to *quicken* the Pace of what is ever on the *Wing?* Shall I ſquander away what is *unutterably important*, while it laſts; and, when once departed, is *altogether irrevocable?* O! my Soul, forbear the Folly; forbear

cents, as the midnight Deſart reſounds with the Lion's Roar. The Artillery of the Skies is diſcharged at the Signal; a Peal of ſevenfold Thunder ſpreads the Alarm; and prepares the World to receive his Orders.—To finiſh all; and give the higheſt Grandeur, as well as the utmoſt Solemnity, to the Repreſentation; hear the *Decree* that iſſues from his Mouth. He *ſwears by HIM that liveth for ever and ever*. In whatever Manner, ſo majeſtic a Perſon, had expreſſed Himſelf; He could not fail of commanding univerſal Attention. But, when He confirms his Speech, by a moſt ſacred and inviolable Oath; we are not only wrapt in ſilent Suſpenſe, but overwhelmed with the profoundeſt Awe.——He ſwears, *That Time ſhall be no longer*. Was ever Voice, ſo full of Terror; ſo big with Wonder? It proclaims, not the Fall of Empires, but the final Period of Things. It ſtrikes off the Wheels of Nature; bids Ages and Generations ceaſe to roll; and, with one potent Word, conſigns a whole World over to Diſſolution.—This is *one*, among a *Multitude* of very ſublime and *maſterly Strokes*, to be found in that too much neglected Book—the BIBLE.

forbear the deſperate Extravagance. Wilt Thou chide as a *Loiterer*, the Arrow that *boundeth* from the String; or ſweep away *Diamonds*, as the *Refuſe* of thy Houſe?—Throw Time away! Aſtoniſhing, ruinous, irreparable Profuſeneſs! Throw Empires away, and be blameleſs. But O! be parſimonious of thy Days; huſband thy precious Hours. They go connected, indiſſolubly connected, with Heaven or Hell *. *Improved*, they are a ſure Pledge of everlaſting Glory; *waſted*, they are a ſad Preface to never-ending Confuſion and Anguiſh.

WHAT a *profound Silence* has compoſed the World! So profound is the Silence, that my very Breath ſeems a Noiſe; the Ticking of my Watch is diſtinctly heard; if I do but ſtir, it creates a Diſturbance.—There is, now, none of that confuſed Din, from the tumultuous City:

* I remember to have ſeen, upon a Sun-dial in a Phyſician's Garden at *Northampton*, the following INSCRIPTION; which, I think, is the moſt *proper Motto* for the Inſtrument, that meaſures our Time; and the moſt *ſtriking Admonition*, which can poſſibly be given, to every Eye that glances upon it. —*Ab hoc Momento pendet Æternitas.*—The weighty Senſe of which I know not how to expreſs in *Engliſh* more happily than in thoſe Words of Dr. *Watts*,

Good God! on what a *ſlender Thread*
[Or, on what a *Moment* of Time]
Hang everlaſting Things!

No Voice of jovial Ruſtics, from the neighbouring Meadow: No chirping Melody, from the ſhady Thicket.—Every Lip is ſealed: Not the leaſt Whiſper, invades the Air; nor the leaſt Motion, ruſtles among the Boughs. *Echo* herſelf ſleeps unmoleſted. The expanded Ear, though all Attention, catches no Sound, but the *liquid Lapſe* of a murmuring Stream.

All Things are huſh'd, as Nature's Self lay dead.

IF, in the midſt of this *deep* and univerſal *Compoſure*, *Ten thouſand* bellowing *Thunders* ſhould burſt over my Head; and rend the Skies, with their united Vollies: O! how ſhould I bear ſo *unexpected* a *Shock?* It would ſtun my Senſes, and confound my Thoughts. I ſhould ſhudder in every Limb; and, perhaps, ſink to the Earth with Terror.—Conſider then, O Mortals! conſider, what a much more *prodigious* and *amazing* Call will, ere long, alarm your ſleeping Bones. When the Tenants of the Tomb have ſlumbered, in the moſt undiſturbed Repoſe, for a Multitude of Ages; what an inconceivable Conſternation muſt the *Shout* of the *Archangel*, and the *Trump* of GOD, occaſion! Will it not wound the Ear of the Ungodly; and affright, even to Diſtraction, the impeditent Sinner? The ſtupendous Peal will ſound through the Vaſt of Heaven; will ſhake the Foundations of Nature; and pierce even the deepeſt Receſſes of the Grave. And how—— O! how will the *Priſoners* of Divine *Juſtice*, be

able

able to endure that tremendous *Summons*, to a more tremendous *Tribunal?*——Do Thou, my Soul, liſten to the *ſtill Voice* of the Goſpel. Attend, in this thy Day, to the gracious Invitations of thy Saviour. Then, ſhall that great midnight Cry loſe it's *Horror*, and be *Muſic* to thy Ears. It ſhall be welcome to thy reviving Clay, as the Tidings of Liberty, to the Dungeon Captive; as the Year of Jubilee, to the haraſſed *Slave*. This, this ſhall be it's charming Import, "*Awake, and ſing, ye that dwell in Duſt* *."

WHAT a general *Ceſſation* of *Affairs*, has this duſky Hour introduced! A little while ago, all was Hurry, Hurry. Life and Activity exerted themſelves, in a thouſand buſy Forms. The City ſwarmed, with paſſing and repaſſing Multitudes. All the Country, was Sweat and Duſt. The Air floated in perpetual Agitation, by the flitting Birds, and humming Bees, *Art* ſat prying with her piercing Eyes; while *Induſtry* plied her reſtleſs Hands.—But ſee; how all this fervent, and impetuous Buſtle, is fled with the ſetting Sun. The Beaſts are ſlunk, to their graſſy Couch; and the winged People are retired, to their downy Neſts. The Hammer has reſigned it's ſounding Taſk, and the File ceaſes to repeat it's flying Touches. Shut is the well-frequented Shop, and it's Threſhold no longer worn by the Feet of numerous Cuſtomers.

* Iſa. xxvi. 19.

Cuſtomers. The Village-Swain lies drowned in Slumbers; and even his truſty Dog, who, for a conſiderable Time, ſtood Centry at his Door, is extended at his Eaſe, and ſnores with his Maſter.—In every Place, *Toil* reclines her Head, and *Application* folds her Arms. All Intereſts ſeem to be forgot; all Purſuits are ſuſpended; all Employment is ſunk away; ſunk away, like the fluttering Myriads, that lately ſported in the Sun's departing Rays. 'Tis like the Sabbath of univerſal Nature; or as though the Pulſe of Life ſtood ſtill.

THUS will it be, with our infinitely momentous Concerns; when once *the Shadows of the Evening*, that long Evening which follows the Footſteps of Death, *are ſtretched over Us*. The Dead cannot ſeek unto GOD; the Living, the Living alone, are poſſeſſed of this ineſtimable Opportunity *. "There is no Work or Device, no "Repentance or Amendment, in the Grave, "whither We are All haſting †." When once that

* —*Nunc, nunc properandus, & acri*
Fingendus ſine fine rota. PERS.
Behold! *now* is the accepted Time. Behold! *now* is the Day of Salvation. 2 *Cor.* vi. 2.

† The *State* of the *Dead* is ſtiled, by King *Hezekiah* (Iſa. xxxviii. 11.), in that pathetic Lamentation of his expected Doom, ארץ חדל; and is rendered by *Vitringa*, *Terra Ceſſationis*, *the Land of* Intermiſſion or *Ceſſation*. Which prevents all Appearance of *Tautology* in the Sentence; and is, I think, a valuable *Improvement* of the Tranſlation: as it conveys

that *closing Scene* is advanced, We ſhall have no other Part to act on this *earthly Theatre*. Then, the Sluggard, who has ſlumbered away Life in a criminal Inactivity, muſt lie down in hopeleſs Diſtreſs, and everlaſting Sorrow. Then, that awful Doom will take place, "He that is *holy*, "let Him be holy ſtill; and he that is *filthy*, "let Him be filthy for ever."

Is it ſo, my Soul? Is this the *only*, *only* Time allotted, for obtaining the great Reward, and making thy Salvation ſure? And art Thou lulled, in a *vain Security*; or dreaming on, in a *ſupine Inadvertency?* Start, O! ſtart from thy Trance. Gird up the Loins of thy Mind, and work while it is Day. Improve the preſent Seed-time, that Eternity

conveys an Idea, not only diſtinct from the precedeing, but of a very poetical and very afflicting Nature; ſuch as was perfectly proper for the Royal Singer, and Royal Sufferer, to dwell upon, in his deſponding Moments.—Thus interpreted, the Senſe will run; "*I ſhall ſee Man no more*; I ſhall be cut "off from the chearful Ways of Men, and all the "Sweets of human Society. And, what is a far-"ther Aggravation of the threatened Stroke, *I ſhall*, "by its taking place, *be* numbered *with Thoſe, that* "*inhabit the Land of* intire *Ceſſation* and Inactivity: "Where there will be no more Poſſibility, of con-"tributing to the Happineſs of my Kingdom; no "more Opportunity, of advancing my Creator's "Glory, or of making my own final Salvation "ſure."—A Sentiment like *this*, is grand, and important; full of Piety, and full of Benevolence; removes all Suſpicion of unbecoming *Puſillanimity*, and does the higheſt *Honour* to the Monarch's Character.

Eternity may yield a joyful Harveſt.—We eſpecially, who are *Watchmen* in *Iſrael*, and *Miniſters* of the glorious *Goſpel*; may *We* be awakened, by this Conſideration, to all Aſſiduity in our holy Office. Some or other of *our People*, are ever and anon departing into the inviſible State; all *our Friends*, are making inceſſant Approaches to their long Home; and we *ourſelves*, ſhall very ſhortly be tranſmitted to the Confinement of the Tomb. *This* therefore is the favourable Juncture, wherein alone we can contribute to their endleſs Welfare. This is the Criſis, the *all-important Criſis*, of their final Felicity. Inſtantly, therefore, let Us pour in our wholſome Inſtructions; now let Us ply them with our earneſt Exhortations. A Moment's Delay, may be an irreparable Loſs; may be irretrievable Ruin. While we procraſtinate, a fatal Stroke may intervene; and place *Us*, beyond the Power of adminiſtring; or place *Them*, beyond all Poſſibility of receiving, any ſpiritual Good *.

How frequently is the Face of Nature *changed!* and, by changing, made more *agreeable!*—The long-

* The *Caſe*, repreſented by the *Prophet* (1 Kings xx. 40.), ſeems perfectly applicable on this Occaſion. *As thy Servant was buſy here and there, He was gone.* So, while we are either *remiſs* in our Function, or laying ourſelves out upon *inferior Cares*, the People of our Charge may be gone:—gone beyond the Influence of our *Counſels*; beyond the Reach of our *Prayers*:—gone into the *unchangeable* and eternal State.

long-continued Glitter of the Day, renders the ſoothing Shades of the Evening doubly welcome. Nor does the Morn ever purple the Eaſt with ſo pleaſing a Luſtre, as after the ſullen Gloom of a dark and black Night.—— At preſent, a *Calm* of Tranquillity, and undiſturbed Repoſe, is ſpread through the Univerſe. The weary Winds have forgot to blow. The gentle Gales have fanned themſelves aſleep. Nothing ſtirs. Not ſo much as a ſingle Leaf nods. Even the quivering Aſpin reſts. *And not one Breath curls o'er the Stream.*—Sometimes, the *Tempeſt* ſummons all the Forces of the Air; and pours itſelf, with reſiſtleſs Fury, from the angry North. The whole Atmoſphere is toſſed into tumultuous Confuſion, and the watery World is heaved to the Clouds. The aſtoniſhed Mariner, and his ſtraining Veſſel, now ſcale the rolling Mountain, and hang dreadfully viſible on the broken Surge: now ſhoot, with headlong Impetuoſity, into the yawning Gulph, and neither Hulk, nor Maſt, is ſeen. The Storm ſweeps over the Continent: raves along the City-ſtreets: ſtruggles through the Foreſt-boughs; and terrifies the ſavage Nations with a Howl, more wildly horrid than their own. The knotty Oaks bend before the Blaſt; their iron Trunks groan; and their ſtubborn Limbs are daſhed to the

the Ground. The lofty Dome rocks; and even the ſolid Tower totters on it's Baſis.

SUCH Variations are kindly contrived, with an evident Condeſcenſion to the Fickleneſs of our Taſte. Becauſe, a perpetual *Similarity* of Objects would create a cold *Diſguſt*; therefore, the indulgent Father of our Race has diverſified the univerſal Scene, and bid every Appearance bring with it the *Charm* of *Novelty*.—But this Circumſtance is as *beneficial*, as it is entertaining. Providence, ever gracious to Mortals; ever intent upon promoting our Felicity; has taken care to mingle, in the Conſtitution of Things, what is pleaſing to our Imagination, with what is ſerviceable to our Intereſts. The piercing Winds, and rugged Aſpect of Winter, render the balmy Gales, and flowery Scenes of Spring, peculiarly delightful. At the ſame time, the keen Froſts mellow the Soil, and prepare it for the Hand of Induſtry. The ruſhing Rains impregnate the Glebe, and fit it for a Magazine of Plenty. The Earth is a great *Laboratory*; and *December*'s Cold collects the groſs Materials, which are *ſublimated* by the refining Warmth of *May*. The Air is a pure *elaſtic* Fluid; and was it always to remain in *this* motionleſs Serenity, it would loſe much of it's *active Spring*; was it never agitated by *thoſe* wholſome *Concuſſions*, it would contract a noiſome,

noiſome, perhaps, a peſtilential Taint. Inſtead of purifying, it would corrupt the vital Juices; and, inſtead of inhaling Refreſhment, our Reſpiration might be a Source of Diſeaſes; or every Gaſp we draw, might be Death *.—How then ſhould we admire! Oh! how ſhould we adore, that happy Union of Benignity and Wiſdom; which, from a *Variety* of Diſpenſations, produces an *Uniformity* of Good; a perpetual Succeſſion of Delights, and an uninterrupted Series of Advantages.

THE *Darkneſs* is now at it's Height; and I cannot but admire the obliging Manner of it's taking

* Conſidering the immenſe Quantity of Coals, and other combuſtible Materials, that are daily conſumed, and evaporate into the Air.—Conſidering the numberleſs Steams, and Clouds of Smoke, that almoſt continually overwhelm populous Cities;—the noiſome Exhalations, that ariſe from thronged Infirmaries, and loathſome Jayls; from ſtagnating Lakes, and putrid Fens;—the Variety of offenſive and unwholſome Effluvia, that proceed from other Cauſes;—it is a very remarkable Inſtance of a Providence, at once tenderly kind, and infinitely powerful, that *Mankind* is not *ſuffocated* with *Stench*; that the *Air* is not *choaked* with *Filth*.—The Air is the *common Sewer*, into which ten thouſand times ten thouſand Nuiſances are inceſſantly diſcharged; and yet is preſerved ſo *thoroughly clear*, as to afford the moſt tranſparent Medium for Viſion; ſo *delicately undulatory*, as to tranſmit, with all imaginable Diſtinctneſs, every Diverſity of Sound; ſo *perfectly pure*, as to be the conſtant Refiner of the Fluids, in every Animal that breathes.

taking place. It comes not with a blunt and *abrupt Incivility*, but makes gentle and *reſpectful Advances*. A precipitate Tranſition, from the Splendors of Day, to all the Horrors of Midnight, would be both inconvenient and frightful. It would bewilder the Traveller in his Journey; it would ſtrike the Creation with Amazement; and, perhaps, be pernicious to the Organs of Sight. Therefore, the Gloom ruſhes not upon us inſtantaneouſly, but increaſes by ſlow Degrees; and, ſending *Twilight* before as it's *Harbinger*, decently adverti ſes us of it's Approach. By this means, we are neither alarmed, nor incommoded, by the Change; but are able to take all ſuitable and timely Meaſures, for it's Reception. — Thus graciouſly has Providence regulated, not only the *grand Viciſſitudes* of the Seaſons, but alſo the *common Interchanges* of Light and Darkneſs, with an apparent Reference to *our Comfort*.

NOW, the fierce *Inhabitants* of the *Foreſt* forſake their Dens. A thouſand grim Forms, a thouſand growling Monſters, pace the Deſart. Death is in their Jaws, while, ſtung with Hunger, and athirſt for Blood, they roam their nightly Rounds. —— O! *unfortunate Traveller*, overtaken by the Night, in thoſe diſmal Wilds! How muſt He ſtand aghaſt, at the mingled Yell of ravenous Throats, and Lions roaring after their Prey! Defend Him, propitious Heaven!

or

or elſe He muſt ſee his endearing Spouſe, and hail his native Home, no more!——Now, the prowling Wolf, like a murderous Ruffian, dogs the Shepherd's Footſteps, and beſets his bleating Charge. The Fox, like a crafty Felon, ſteals to the thatched Cottage, and carries off the feathered Booty.

HAPPY for the World, were theſe the only Deſtroyers that walk in Darkneſs. But, alas! there are *Savages* in *human Shape*; who, muffled in Shades, infeſt the Abodes of civilized Life. The *Sons* of *Violence* make Choice of this Seaſon *, to perpetrate the moſt outrageous Acts of Wrong and Robbery. The *Adulterer* waiteth for the Twilight; and, baſer than the Villain on the Highway, betrays the Honour of his Boſom-friend. Now, *Faction* forms her cloſe Cabals, and whiſpers her traiterous Inſinuations. Now, *Rebellion* plans her accurſed Plots, and prepares the Train to blow a Nation into Ruin. Now Crimes, that hide their odious Heads in the Day, haunt the Seats of Society, and ſtalk through the Gloom with audacious Front. Now, the *Vermin* of the *Stews* crawl from their lurking Holes, to wallow in Sin, and feed on the Venom

* ——— When Night
Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons
Of *Belial*, flown with Inſolence and Wine.
MILT.

of the Night. Each ſoothing himſelf with the *fond Notion*, That all is ſafe; That *no Eye ſees*.

AND are They then concealed? Prepoſterous Madmen! To draw the Curtain between their infamous Practices, and a *little Set* of Mortals; but lay them open to all theſe chaſte and *wakeful Eyes* of Heaven *. — Are they then concealed? No, truly: Were theſe vigilant Luminaries cloſed; an Eye *keener* than the Lightning's Flaſh, *brighter* than Ten Thouſand Suns, beholds their every Motion. Their *thickeſt Shades are beaming Day* †, to the jealous Inſpector, and ſupreme Judge, of human Actions.—Deluded Creatures! have ye not heard, have ye not read, "That "Clouds and Darkneſs are His majeſtic Reſi-"dence ‡?" In that very Gloom, to which you fly for Covert, he erects his Throne. What you reckon your *Screen*, is the *Bar* of his *Tribunal*. O! remember this: ſtand in Awe, and ſin not. Remember, that the great and terrible GOD *is about*

* —— *Sed Luna videt, ſed Sidera Teſtes*
Intendunt Oculos.

† This is finely, and very forcibly, expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt: *If I ſay, Peradventure the Darkneſs ſhall cover me, then ſhall my Night be turned to Day:* Or, as it may be rendered ſomewhat more emphatically, *Even the Night ſhall be broad Day-light all around me.* Pſal. cxxxix. 10.

‡ Pſal. xcvii. 2.

about your Path *, when you take your midnight Range; is *about your Bed*, when you indulge the looſe Deſire; *and ſpies out all your Ways*, be they ever ſo ſecretly conducted, or artfully diſguiſed.

Some Minutes ago, a Paſſenger croſſed along the Road. His Horſe's Foot ſtruck the Ground, and fetched Fire from a Flint. My Eye, tho' at a Diſtance, catched the View; and ſaw, with *great Clearneſs*, the bright Sparkles: Of which, had I been ever ſo near, I ſhould not have diſcerned the *leaſt Glimpſe*, under the Blaze of Day.——So †, when Sickneſs has drawn a *Veil* over

* The original Words are much ſtronger than the Tranſlation. זריתand הסכנתה ſignify, Thou *ſifteſt* my Path; and art *familiarly*, or *intimately*, *acquainted with* all my Ways. The former, I apprehend, denoting the *exact Cognizance*, which the Almighty taketh; the latter implying the *conſtant Inſpection*, which he exerciſeth; over all the Circumſtances of our Conduct. *Pſal.* cxxxix. 2.

† I beg leave to inform the *young Gentleman*, whoſe Name dignifies my Dedication; That *this* was a Remark of his honoured *Father*, when we rode together, and converſed in a duſky Evening. I mention this Circumſtance, partly, to ſecure the Paragraph from Contempt; partly, to give Him, and the World, an Idea of that eminently ſerious Taſte, which diſtinguiſhed my deceaſed Friend.—The *leſs obvious* the *Reflection*, the more clearly it diſcovers a

over the Gaiety of our Hearts; when *Misfortunes* have *eclipſed* the Splendor of our outward Circumſtances; how many *important Convictions* preſent themſelves with the brighteſt Evidence? Under the Sunſhine of Proſperity they lay undiſcovered; but, when ſome intervening Cloud has darkened the Scene, they emerge out of their Obſcurity, and even glitter upon our Minds. Then, the *World*, that deluſive Cheat, confeſſes her Emptineſs: but JESUS, the bright and Morning-Star, beams forth with inimitable Luſtre. Then, *Vice* loſes all her fallacious Allurements; that painted Strumpet is horrible, as the Hags of Hell: but *Virtue*, deſpiſed Virtue, gains Lovelineſs from a louring Providence, and treads the Shades with more than mortal Charms.—May this reconcile me, and all the *Sons* of *Sorrow*, to our appointed Share of Suffering. If Tribulation tend to diſſipate the inward Darkneſs, and pour heavenly Day upon our Minds; welcome Diſtreſs; welcome Diſappointment; welcome whatever our froward Fleſh, or peeviſh Paſſions, would *miſcal* Calamities. *Theſe light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment*, ſhall

ſit

Turn of Mind remarkably ſpiritual; which would ſuffer nothing to eſcape without yielding ſome religious Improvement: And the *meaner* the *Incident*, the more admirable was that Fertility of Imagination, which could deduce the nobleſt Truths from the moſt trivial Occurrences.

ſit eaſy upon our Spirits; ſince they befriend our Knowledge; promote our Faith; and ſo, "*work* "*out for us, a far more exceeding and eternal* "*Weight of Glory* *."

How has this *Darkneſs* ſnatched every ſplendid and graceful Object from my Sight! It has daſhed the Sponge over the Pictures of Spring, and deſtroyed all the *delicate Diſtinctions* of Things. Where are now the fine Tinges, that ſo lately charmed me from the glowing Parterre? The Bluſh is ſtruck out, from the Cheeks of the Roſe; and the ſnowy Hue, is dropt from the Lily. I caſt my Eyes toward a magnificent Seat; but the aſpiring Columns, and fair-ex-

 panded

* 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. The great *Stephens*, that Oracle of *Grecian* Learning, tranſlates our Apoſtle's Phraſe —καθ' υπερβολην, *Quo nihil magis dici aut fingi poteſt.* But how does the Senſe riſe? How is the Idea inlarged, under *Two* ſuch forcible Expreſſions? — The whole Verſe is a Maſterpiece of the beautiful *Antitheſis*, the lively *Deſcription*, and the nervous *Diction*. It is one of thoſe noble Paſſages in the inſpired Writings, which, like ſome rich *aromatic Plants*, cannot be transferred from their own generous and native Soil, without being impaired in their Vivacity, and loſing much of their Delicacy. Perhaps, the following Verſion may be ſomewhat leſs injurious to the ſacred Original, than the common Tranſlation;—*Our very light Affliction, which is but juſt for the preſent Moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, an incomparably great, and eternal Weight of Glory.*

panded Front, are mingled in rude Confuſion. Without the Sun, all the *Elegance* of the blooming World, is a *mere Blank*; all the *Symmetry* of Architecture, a *ſhapeleſs Heap*.

Is not this an expreſſive Emblem of the *Lovelineſs*, which the *Sun* of *Righteouſneſs* transfuſes into all that is amiable? Was it not for JESUS, and his *Merits*, I ſhould ſigh with Anguiſh of Spirit; even while I rove through Ranks of the moſt beautiful Flowers, or breathe amidſt a Wilderneſs of Sweets. Was it not for JESUS, and his Merits; I ſhould roam, like ſome *diſconſolate Spectre*, even through the Smiles of Creation, and the Careſſes of Fortune. My Converſation in this World, though dreſſed in the moſt engaging Forms of external Pleaſure, would be like the Paſſage of a *condemned Malefactor*, through enamelled Meadows, and Bowers of Bliſs, to be broke upon the Wheel, or tortured to Death on the Rack. But a *daily Reflection*, on the LAMB's atoning Blood; a *comfortable Truſt*, that my Soul is reconciled through this glorious Expiation; this is the Ray, the golden Ray, that irradiates the Face of the Univerſe. This is the *Oil* of *Beauty*, which makes all Things wear a chearful Aſpect; and the *Oil* of *Gladneſs*, which diſpoſes the Spectator to behold them with Delight.

Delight *. This, this, is the ſecret Charm, that teaches Nature, in all her Operations, ſo exquiſitely to pleaſe.

" MAN goeth forth to his Work, and to his " Labour, till the Evening." But then his Strength fails; his Spirits flag; and he ſtands in need, not only of ſome *Reſpite* from *Toil*, but of ſome kindly and ſovereign *Refreſhments*. — What an admirable Proviſion for this Purpoſe, is *Sleep!* Sleep introduces a moſt welcome Vacation, both for the Soul and Body. The Exerciſes of the Brain, and the Labours of the Hands, are at once diſcontinued. So that the *weary Limbs* repair their exhauſted Vigour; while the

* Thus applied, that fine Piece of *Flattery*, addreſſed to the *Heathen* Emperor, is ſtrictly and literally *true*.

——— *Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulſit populo, gratior it dies,
Et ſoles melius nitent. HORAT.

Which I would caſt in a *Chriſtian* Mould, and thus tranſlate:

When Faith preſents the Saviour's Death,
And whiſpers, " This is thine;"
Sweetly my riſing Hours advance,
And peacefully decline.

While ſuch my Views, the radiant Sun
Sheds a more ſprightly Ray;
Each Object ſmiles; all Nature charms;
I ſing my Cares away.

penſive Thoughts drop their Load of Sorrows, and the *buſy* ones reſt from the Fatigue of intenſe Application.—Moſt reviving Cordial! Equally beneficial to our animal and intellectual Powers. It ſupples the *fleſhly Machine*, and keeps all its nice Movements in a proper Poſture for eaſy Play. It animates the *thinking Faculties* with freſh Alacrity, and rekindles their Ardor for the Studies of the Dawn. Without theſe enlivening Recruits, how ſoon would the moſt robuſt Conſtitution, be waſted into a *walking Skeleton*; and the moſt learned Sage, degenerate into a *hoary Idiot!*—Some time ago, I beheld, with Surprize, poor *Florio*. His Air was wild; his Countenance meagre; his Thoughts roving, and Speech diſconcerted. Inquiring the Cauſe of this ſtrange Alteration, I was informed, That, for ſeveral Nights, he had not cloſed his Eyes in Sleep. For want of which *noble Reſtorative*; that ſprightly Youth, who was once the Life of the Diſcourſe; and the Darling of the Company; is become a Spectacle of Miſery and Horror.

How many of my Fellow-Creatures are, at this very Inſtant, confined to the *Bed* of *Languiſhing*; and complaining, with that illuſtrious Sufferer of old, *Weariſome Nights are appointed to me* *! Inſtead of indulging ſoft Repoſe, they are counting the tedious Hours; telling every ſtriking Clock; or meaſuring the very Moments, by

* Job vii. 3.

by their throbbing Pulſe. How many, *haraſſed* with *Pain*, moſt paſſionately long to obtain ſome little Truce from their Agonies, in peaceful Slumbers! How many, *ſick* with *Diſquietude*, and reſtleſs even on their downy Pillows, would purchaſe this tranſient Oblivion of their Woes, almoſt at any Rate!—That, which Wealth cannot procure; which Multitudes ſigh for in vain; thy GOD has beſtowed on Thee, times out of Number. The *welcome Viſitant*, punctual at the needed Hour, has entered thy Chamber, and poured his Poppies round thy Couch. Has gently cloſed thy Eye-lids, and ſhed his ſlumberous Dews over all thy Senſes.

SINCE Sleep is ſo abſolutely neceſſary; ſo ineſtimably valuable; obſerve, what a *fine Apparatus* Almighty Goodneſs has made, to accommodate us with the *balmy Bleſſing*. With how kind a Precaution, He removes whatever might obſtruct it's Acceſs, or impede it's Influence. He draws around us the *Curtain* of *Darkneſs*; which inclines us to a drowſy Indolence, and conceals every Object, that might too ſtrongly agitate the Senſe. He conveys *Peace* into our *Apartments*; and impoſes Silence, on the whole Creation. Every Animal is bidden to tread ſoftly, or rather to ceaſe from it's Motions, when Man is retiring to his Repoſe.——May we not diſcern, in this gracious Diſpoſition of Things, the *tender Cares*

of

of a *Nurſing-Mother*; who huſhes every Noiſe, and ſecludes every Diſturbance, when She has laid the Child of her Love to Reſt? *So*, by ſuch ſoothing Circumſtances, and gently-working Opiates, *HE giveth, to his Beloved, Sleep* *.

ANOTHER ſignal Inſtance of a Providence intent upon our Welfare, is, That we are preſerved *ſafe* in the Hours of *Slumber*. How are we then loſt to all Apprehenſion of Danger; even though the Murderer be at our Bed-ſide, or his naked Sword at our Breaſt! Deſtitute of all Concern for ourſelves, we are unable to *think of*, much more to *provide for*, our own Security. At theſe Moments, therefore, we lie open to innumerable Perils: Perils, from the reſiſtleſs Rage of *Flames*: Perils, from the inſidious Artifices of *Thieves*, or the outrageous Violence of *Robbers*; without either Vigilance to obſerve the Foe, or Strength to reſiſt the Aſſault: Perils, from the *irregular Workings* † of our own Thoughts, and eſpecially from the Incurſions of our ſpiritual

* Pſal. cxxvii. 2.

† I think, it is referable only to a ſuperintending and watchful *Providence*, that We are not hurried, when our Imagination is heated, and our Reaſon ſtupefied by Dreams, into the moſt *pernicious* Actions. —We have ſometimes heard of unfortunate Perſons, who, walking in their Sleep, have thrown themſelves headlong from a Window, and been daſhed to Death on the Pebbles. And whence is it, that ſuch diſaſtrous Accidents are only *related* as Pieces of News,

tual Enemy. What dreadful Miſchief might that reſtleſs, that implacable *Adverſary* of *Mankind* work, were there not an inviſible Hand to controul his Rage, and protect poor Mortals! What News, not *experienced* by Ourſelves, or our Families? Were *our* Minds more ſober in their Operations, or more circumſpect in their Regards? No, verily: nothing could be more wild, than their Excurſions; None more inattentive to their own Welfare. Therefore, if *we have laid Us down, and ſlept* in Peace; it was, becauſe the LORD vouchſafed Us the ſweet Refreſhment: if *We roſe again* in Safety; it was, *becauſe the LORD ſuſtained Us* with his unremitted Protection.

Will the candid Reader excuſe me, if I add a ſhort Story, or rather a *Matter* of *Fact*, which I know to be true?—Two Perſons, that had been hunting together in the Day, ſlept together the following Night. One of them was renewing the Purſuit in his Dream; and, having run the whole Circle of the Chace, came, at laſt, to the Fall of the Stag. Upon this, He cries out with a determined Ardour; *I'll kill him: I'll kill him:* and immediately feels for the Knife, which he carried in his Pocket. His Companion, happening to be awake, and obſerving what paſſed, leaped from the Bed; and, being ſecure from Danger, ſtood (for the Moon ſhined into the Room) to view the Event. When, to his inexpreſſible Surprize, the infatuated Sportſman gave ſeveral deadly Stabs, in the very Place, where, a Moment before, the Throat and the Life of his Friend lay.—This I mention, as a Proof, that nothing hinders Us, even from being *Aſſaſſins* of *Others*; or *Murderers* of *Ourſelves*; amidſt the mad Sallies of Sleep; only the *preventing Care* of our Heavenly Father.

What Scenes of Horror might he repreſent to our Imaginations, and "ſcare us with Dreams, "or terrify us with Viſions *!" But the *Keeper* of *Iſrael*, who never ſlumbers, nor ſleeps, interpoſes in our Behalf; at once to *cheriſh* us under his Wings, and to *defend* us as with a *Shield*. It is ſaid of *Solomon*, "That three-"ſcore valiant Men were about his Bed; all ex-"pert in War; every one with his Sword upon "his Thigh, becauſe of Fear in the Night †." But One greater than *Solomon*; One mightier than Myriads of armed Hoſts; even the great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting Strength; HE vouchſafes to watch over our ſleeping Minutes, and to ſtop all the Avenues of Ill.—Oh! the unwearied and condeſcending *Goodneſs* of our Creator! Who *lulls* us to our *Reſt*, by bringing on the ſilent Shades; and *plants* his own ever-watchful Eye as our *Centinel*, while we enjoy the needful Repoſe.

REASON, now, reſigns her ſedate Office; and *Fancy*, extravagant Fancy, leads the Mind through

* What a complete Maſter that malignant Spirit is, in exhibiting *viſionary Repreſentations*, appears from his Conduct towards CHRIST, on the high Mountain; and that he is too ready, if not reſtrained by an over-ruling Power, to employ his Dexterity in *afflicting Mankind*, is evident from his Treatment of *Job*. See *Luke* iv. 5. *Job* vii. 14.

† Cant. iii. 7, 8.

through a *Maze* of *Vanity*. The Head is crouded with falſe Images, and tantalized with the moſt ridiculous Miſapprehenſions of Things. Some are expatiating amidſt *Fairy Fields*, and gathering Garlands of viſionary Bliſs; while their Bodies are ſtretched on a Wiſp of Straw, and ſheltered by the Cobwebs of a Barn. Others, quite inſenſible of their Rooms of State, are mourning in a *doleful Dungeon*, or ſtruggling with the raging Billows. Perhaps, with haſty Steps, they climb the craggy Cliff; and, with *real* Anxiety, fly from the *imaginary* Danger. Or elſe, benumbed with ſudden Fear, and finding themſelves unable to eſcape, they give up at once their Hopes, and their Efforts; and, though reclined on a Couch of Ivory, are ſinking, all helpleſs and diſtreſſed, in the furious Whirlpool. So unaccountable are the *Vagaries* of the *Brain*, while Sleep maintains it's Dominion over the Limbs!

But is This the only Seaſon, when abſurd and incoherent Irregularities play their Magic on our Minds? Are there not thoſe who *dream*, even in their *waking* Moments?—Some pride Themſelves in a Notion of *ſuperior Excellency*, becauſe the Royal Favour has annexed a few ſplendid Titles to their Names; or becauſe the dying Silkworm has bequeathed her fineſt Threads, to cover their Nakedneſs.—— Others congratulate their

their own *ſignal Happineſs*, becauſe Loads of golden Lumber are amaſſed together in their Coffers; or promiſe themſelves a moſt ſuperlative Felicity indeed, when ſome Thouſands more are added to the uſeleſs Heap.—Nor are there wanting Others, who gape after *ſubſtantial* Satisfaction from *airy* Applauſe; and flatter themſelves with, I know not what, Immortality in the momentary Buz of Renown. Are any of Theſe a whit more reaſonable in their *Opinions*, than the poor ragged Wretch in his *Reveries*; who, while ſnoring under a Hedge, exults in the Poſſeſſion of his ſtately Palace, and ſumptuous Furniture? — If Perſons, who are *very Vaſſals* to their own *domineering* Paſſions, and led captive by numberleſs Temptations: if theſe Perſons pique themſelves with a Conceit of their *Liberty*, and fancy themſelves the *generous* and *gallant* Spirits of the Age: where is the Difference between Theirs, and the Madman's Phrenſy; who, though *chained* to the Floor, is *throned* in Thought, and wielding an imaginary Sceptre?——In a Word; as many as borrow their Dignity from a Plume of Feathers, or the gaudy Trappings of Fortune; as many as ſend their Souls to ſeek for Bliſs in the Blandiſhments of Senſe, or in any Thing ſhort of the divine Favour, and a well-grounded Hope of

the incorruptible Inheritance *; what are they, but Dreamers with their Eyes open; *delirious*, though in *Health?*

WOULD you ſee their *Picture*, drawn to the very *Life*; and the Succeſs of their *Schemes*, calculated with the utmoſt *Exactneſs*; caſt your Eye upon that fine Repreſentation, exhibited by the Prophet: *It ſhall be even as when a hungry Man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his Soul is empty: Or as when a thirſty Man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint, and his Soul hath Appetite* †. Such is the *Race*, and ſuch the *Prize*; of all thoſe *Candidates* for *Honour* and *Joy*, who run wide of the Mark of the high Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. They live in Vanity, and die in Woe. — Awaken us, merciful LORD, from theſe *noon-tide Trances!* Awaken us, while Conviction may turn to our Advantage, and not ſerve only to increaſe our Torment. O! let our "Eyes be enlightened, "to diſcern the Things that are excellent;" and no longer be impoſed upon by fantaſtic Appearances, which, however *pompous* they may ſeem, will prove more *empty* than the Viſions of the

* *Theſe* give a ſacred, and home-felt Delight,
A *ſober Certainty* of *waking* Bliſs.
MILT. *The Maſk.*

† Iſa. xxix. 8.

the Night, more *tranſient* than the Dream that is forgotten.

HAVING mentioned *Sleep* and *Dreams*, let me once again conſider thoſe remarkable Incidents of our Frame: ſo very remarkable, that I may venture to call them, a kind of experimental *Myſtery*, and little leſs than a ſtanding *Miracle*. —Behold the moſt *vigorous Conſtitution*, when ſtretched on the Bed of Eaſe, and totally reſigned to the Slumbers of the Night. It's Activity is oppreſſed with Fetters of Indolence; it's Strength is conſigned over to a temporary Annihilation; the Nerves are like a Bow unſtrung, and the whole animal Syſtem like a motionleſs Log.—— Behold a Perſon of the moſt *delicate Senſations*, and *amiable Diſpoſitions*. His Eyes, though thrown wide open, admit not the viſual Ray; at leaſt, diſtinguiſh not Objects. His Ears, with the Organs unimpaired, and articulate Accents beating upon the Drum, perceive not the Sound; at leaſt, apprehend not the Meaning. The Senſes, and their exquiſitely fine Feelings, are overwhelmed with an unaccountable Stupefaction. You call him a *ſocial* Creature; but where are his ſocial Affections? He knows not the Father, that begat him; and takes no Notice of the Friend, that is as his own Soul. The Wife of his Boſom may expire by his Side, and He lie unconcerned

concerned as a Barbarian. The Children of his Body may be tortured with the ſevereſt Pangs; and He, even in the ſame Chamber, remain untouched with the leaſt Commiſeration.——Behold the moſt *ingenious Scholar:* whoſe Judgment is piercing, and able to trace the moſt intricate Difficulties of Science; his Taſte refined, and quick to reliſh all the Beauties of Sentiment and Compoſition. Yet, at this Juncture, the thinking Faculties are unhinged, and the intellectual Oeconomy quite diſconcerted. Inſtead of cloſe connected Reaſonings, nothing but a diſjointed Huddle of abſurd Ideas: inſtead of well-digeſted Principles, nothing but a diſorderly Jumble of crude Conceptions. The moſt palpable Deluſions impoſe upon his Imagination. The whole Night paſſes, and he frequently miſtakes it for a ſingle Minute: is not ſenſible of the Tranſition, hardly ſenſible of any Duration.

YET, no ſooner does the Morning draw back his Curtain, and Day-light fill the Room; but he awakes, and finds himſelf *poſſeſſed* of all the valuable Endowments; which, for ſeveral Hours, were *ſuſpended*, or *loſt*. He feels his Sinews braced, and fit for Action: his Senſes are alert and keen. The frozen Affections melt with Tenderneſs: the romantic Viſionary brightens into the Maſter of Reaſon. And, what is beyond meaſure ſurpriſing, the intoxicated Mind works it-

ſelf ſober, not by *ſlow Degrees*; but, in the *Twinkling* of an Eye, recovers from it's Perturbation.——Why does not the Numbneſs, that ſeizes the animal Powers, continue; and chain the Limbs, in a perpetually liſtleſs Inability? Why does not the Stupor, that deadens all the nice Operations of the Senſes, hold faſt it's Poſſeſſion? When the Thoughts are once diſ-adjuſted, why are they not always in Confuſion? How is it, that they are rallied in a Moment; and, from the wildeſt Irregularity, reduced to the moſt orderly Array? — From an *Inactivity*, reſembling Death; and from *Extragavancies*, little differing from Madneſs; how is the Body ſo *ſuddenly* reſtored, to Vigour and Agility? How is the Underſtanding *inſtantaneouſly* re-eſtabliſhed, in Sedateneſs and Harmony? — Surely, "this is "the LORD's Doing, and it ſhould be marvel-"lous in our Eyes:" ſhould awaken our Gratitude, and inſpirit our Praiſe.

THIS is the Time, in which *Ghoſts* are ſuppoſed to make their Appearance. Now, the *timorous Imagination* teems with Phantoms, and creates numberleſs Terrors to itſelf. Now, dreary Forms, in ſullen State, ſtalk along the Gloom; or, ſwifter than Lightning, glide acroſs the Shades. Now, Voices more than mortal * are heard

* *Vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita ſilentes*
Ingens, & ſimulacra modis pallentia miris
Viſa ſub obſcurum noctis. VIRG.

heard from the echoing Vaults, and Groans iſſue from the hollow Tombs. Now, melancholy Spectres viſit the Ruins of antient Monaſteries, and frequent the ſolitary Dwellings of the Dead. They paſs and repaſs, in unſubſtantial Images, along the forſaken Galleries; or take their determined Stand over ſome lamented Grave. How often has the School-Boy fetched a long Circuit, and trudged many a needleſs Step, in order to avoid the haunted *Church-yard?* Or, if Neceſſity, ſad Neceſſity, has obliged him to croſs the Spot; where *human Skulls* are lodged below, and the *baleful Yews* ſhed ſupernumerary Horrors above: a thouſand hideous Stories ruſh into his Memory: Fear adds Wings to his Feet: he ſcarce touches the Ground; dares not once look behind him: and bleſſes his good Fortune, if no frightful Sound purred at his Heels, if no ghaſtly Shape bolted upon his Sight *.

'Tis ſtrange, to obſerve the exceſſive Timidity, that poſſeſſes many Peoples Minds, on this *fanciful Occaſion*; while they are void of all Concern, on others of the moſt *tremendous Import.* Thoſe, who are ſtartled, in any dark and lonely Walk, at the *very Apprehenſion* of a ſingle Spectre; are nevertheleſs unimpreſſed at the *ſure*

* See that valuable Poem, ſtiled The Grave.

Proſpect, of entering into a whole World of diſembodied Beings. Nay, are without any Emotions of Awe, though they know themſelves to be haſting into the Preſence of the great, infinite, and eternal Spirit.—Should ſome pale Meſſenger from the Regions of the Dead, draw back our Curtains at the Hour of Midnight; and, appointing ſome particular Place, ſay, as the horrid Apparition to *Brutus*, *I'll meet thee there* *: I believe, the boldeſt Heart would feel ſomething like a Panic; would ſeriouſly think upon the Adventure, and be in Pain for the Event. But, when a Voice from Heaven cries, in the awakening Language of the Prophet, *Prepare to meet thy GOD, O* Iſrael †; how little is the Warning regarded! How ſoon is it forgot! Prepoſterous Stupidity! To be *utterly unconcerned*, where it is the trueſt Wiſdom to take the Alarm; and to be *all Trepidation*, where there is nothing really terrible.—Do Thou, my Soul remember thy Saviour's Admonition; "I will "forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear. Fear "not

* The Story of *Brutus*, and his *evil Genius*, is well known. Nor muſt it be denied, that the preciſe Words of the Spectre to the Hero were, *I'll meet thee at* Philippi. But as this would not anſwer my Purpoſe, I was obliged to make an Alteration in the Circumſtance of *Place*.

† Amos iv. 12.

" not theſe imaginary Horrors of the Night:
" but fear that awful Being; whoſe Revelation
" of Himſelf, though with Expreſſions of pecu-
" liar Mercy, made *Moſes*, his favourite Servant,
" tremble exceedingly: whoſe Manifeſtation,
" with Purpoſes of inexorable Vengeance, will
" make *mighty Conquerors*; that were familiar
" with Dangers, and eſtranged to Diſmay; call
" upon the Mountains to fall on them, and the
" Rocks to cover them: The Menace of whoſe
" majeſtic Eye, when He comes attended with
" thouſand thouſands of his immortal Hoſts, will
" make the very Heavens cleave aſunder, and
" the World flee away.—— O! dread his *Diſ-*
" *pleaſure*; ſecure his *Favour*; and then Thou
" may'ſt commit all thy other *Anxieties* to the
" Wind; Thou may'ſt laugh at every other
" Fear."

THIS brings to my Mind a memorable and amazing Occurrence, recorded in the Book of *Job* *: which is, I think, no inconſiderable Proof of the *real Exiſtence* of Apparitions †, on ſome

* Job iv. 12, 14, &c.

† *Proof of the real Exiſtence of Apparitions.* —— If the Senſe, in which I have always underſtood this Paſſage, be true—*Eliphaz*, I apprehend, was neither in a Trance, nor in a Dream, but perfectly awake.—Though He ſpeaks of Sleep; He ſpeaks of it, as fallen not upon *himſelf*, but upon *other* Men. He does not

ſome *very extraordinary* Emergencies; while it diſcountenances thoſe Legions of idle Tales, which Superſtition has raiſed, and Credulity received. Since it teaches us, that if, at any time, thoſe Viſitants from the unknown World render themſelves perceivable by Mortals, it is not upon any Errand of frivolous Conſequence; but, to *convey Intelligences* of the utmoſt Moment, or to *work Impreſſions* of the higheſt Advantage.

'TWAS in the *Dead of Night*. All Nature lay ſhrouded in Darkneſs. Every Creature was buried

mention *Dreams*, though חלומות *Somnia*, would have ſuited the Verſe (if the Book be in Metre) altogether as well as חזיונות *Viſiones*.—It could not, I think, be a *Wind*, as ſome tranſlate the Word רוח. Becauſe, the Circumſtance of *ſtanding ſtill* is not ſo compatible with the Nature of a Wind; and a Wind would have paſſed *above* Him, all *around* Him, as well as *before* Him; not to add, how low a Remark it is, and how unworthy of a Place in ſo auguſt a Deſcription, that He *could not diſcern the Form* of a Wind—It ſeems, therefore, to have been a *real Spirit*; either *Angelical*, as were thoſe, which preſented themſelves to *Abraham* reſting at the Door of his Tent, and to *Lot* ſitting in the Gate of *Sodom*; or elſe, the Spirit of ſome *departed Saint*, as in the Caſe of *Samuel*'s Apparition, or the famous Appearance of *Moſes* and *Elijah* on the Mount of Transfiguration.—A Spirit, aſſuming ſome *Vehicle*, in order to become viſible to the human Eye. Which, accordingly, *Eliphaz* ſaw, exhibiting itſelf as an Object of Sight. But ſaw ſo *obſcurely*, and *indiſtinctly*, as not to be able, either to deſcribe it's *Aſpect*, or to diſcern *whom* it reſembled.

buried in Sleep. The moſt profound Silence reigned through the Univerſe. In theſe ſolemn Moments, *Eliphaz* alone, all wakeful and ſolitary, was muſing upon ſublime and heavenly Subjects.——When, lo! an awful Being, from the inviſible Realms, burſt into his Apartment *. *A Spirit paſſed before his Face. Aſtoniſhment* ſeized the Beholder. His Bones ſhivered within Him; his Fleſh trembled all over Him; and the Hair of his Head ſtood erect with Horror.—— Sudden, and unexpected, was the *Appearance* of the Phantom; but not ſuch it's *Departure. It ſtood ſtill*, to preſent itſelf more fully to his View. It made a ſolemn Pauſe, to prepare his Mind for ſome momentous Meſſage.——After which, a

* I have given this *ſolemn Picture* a *modern Dreſs*, rather for the Sake of Variety and Illuſtration, than from any Apprehenſion of improving the admirable Original. Such an Attempt, I am ſenſible, would be more abſurd, than to lacquer Gold, or paint the Diamond. The Deſcription, in *Eliphaz*'s own Language, is awful and affecting to the laſt Degree. A *Night-Piece*, dreſſed in all the Circumſtances of the deepeſt Horror. I queſtion, whether *Shakeſpeare* himſelf, though ſo peculiarly happy for his great Command of terrifying Images, has any Thing ſuperior or comparable to this. The Judges of fine Compoſition *ſee* the maſterly Strokes; and, I believe, the moſt ordinary Reader *feels* them, chilling his Blood, and awakening Emotions of Dread in his Mind.

Voice was heard. A Voice, for the Importance of it's Meaning, worthy to be had in everlaſting Remembrance; for the Solemnity of it's Delivery, enough to alarm a Heart of Stone. It ſpoke; and this was the Purport of it's Words;—"*Shall* "Man, *frail* and wretched *Man*, *be Juſt before* "*the mighty GOD? Shall* even *the moſt* up- "right and *accompliſhed of Mortals be pure in the* "*Sight of his Maker* *? *Behold*, and conſider "it attentively. *He put no ſuch Truſt in his* "moſt exalted *Servants*, as ſhould beſpeak them "altogether incapable of Defect, or authorize "them to arrogate any Honour to themſelves. "*And his* very *Angels*, without the leaſt Injury "to their Character, *He charged with Folly*; "as ſinking, even in the higheſt Perfection of "their Holineſs, infinitely beneath his tranſcend- "ent Glories; as falling, even in all the "Fidelity

* There ſeems to be a ſignificant and beautiful *Gradation* in the *Hebrew* Words אנוש and גבר, which I have endeavoured to preſerve, by a ſort of *paraphraſtic Verſion*. — The Reader will obſerve a *new* Turn given to the Sentiment, and much *nobler* than that which our *Engliſh* Tranſlation exhibits. The Paſſage, thus rendered, ſpeaks a Truth incomparably more weighty, and needful to be inculcated. A Truth, exactly parallel to that humbling Confeſſion of the Prophet, *We are all as an unclean Thing*; and to that ſolemn Declaration of the Pſalmiſt, *In thy Sight ſhall no Man living be juſtified. Vide Schult. in loc.*

" Fidelity of their Obedience, inexpreſſibly " ſhort of the Homage due to his moſt adorable " Majeſty. And, if angelic Natures muſt not " preſume to juſtify either Themſelves, or their " Services, before immaculate, and uncreated " Purity; *how much leſs* doth ſuch a Carriage " become *Them, that dwell in Houſes of Clay*; " whoſe Original is from the Duſt, and whoſe " State is all Imperfection!"

I WOULD obſerve from hence, the very ſingular Neceſſity of that *Poverty* of *Spirit*, which intirely *renounces* its own Attainments; and, conſequently, *ſubmits* to the Righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD. To inculcate this Leſſon, the Son of the Bleſſed came down from Heaven; and preſſed no other Principle, with ſo repeated * an Importunity, on his Hearers. To inſtil the ſame Doctrine, the HOLY GHOST touched the Lips of the Apoſtles with ſacred Eloquence; and made it an eminent Part of their Commiſſion, " to bring down every high Imagination." That no Expedient might be wanting, to give it a deep and laſting Efficacy on the human Mind;

a

* It is well worthy of our Obſervation, ſays an excellent Commentator, That no one Sentence uttered by our LORD, is ſo *frequently repeated* as *this*; *Whoſoever ſhall exalt himſelf, ſhall be abaſed*; *and He that ſhall humble himſelf, ſhall be exalted:* Which occurs at leaſt *ten Times* in the Evangeliſts.

a Phantom ariſes from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, or a Teacher deſcends from the Habitation of Spirits.—Whatever then we neglect; let us not neglect to cultivate *this Grace*, which has been ſo variouſly taught, ſo powerfully enforced.

HARK! a *doleful Voice*—With ſudden Starts, and hideous Screams, it diſturbs the Silence of the peaceful Night. 'Tis the *Screech-Owl*, ſometimes in frantic, ſometimes in diſconſolate Accents, uttering her Woes *.—She flies the vocal Grove, and ſhuns the Society of all the feathered Choir. The blooming Gardens, and flowery Meads, have no Charms for Her. Obſcene Shades, ragged Ruins, and Walls overgrown with Ivy, are her favourite Haunts. Above, the mouldering Precipice nods, and threatens a Fall; below, the Toad crawls, or the poiſonous Adder hiſſes. The ſprightly Morning, which awakens other Animals into Joy, adminiſters no Pleaſure to

* *Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo*
Sæpe queri, longaſque in fletum ducere voces.

Thus ſung that charming Genius, that Prince of the antient Poets, that moſt conſummate Maſter of Elegance and Accuracy; all whoſe *Sentiments* are Nature, whoſe every *Deſcription* is a Picture, whoſe whole *Language* is Muſic — *Virgil.*

to this *gloomy Recluſe.* Even the ſmiling Face of Day, is her Averſion; and all it's lovely Scenes create nothing but Uneaſineſs.

So, juſt ſo, would it fare with the *Ungodly*; were it poſſible to ſuppoſe their Admiſſion, into the chaſte and bright *Abodes* of endleſs *Felicity.* They would find nothing but Diſappointment and Shame, even at the Fountain-Head of Happineſs and Honour. For how could the Tongue, habituated to *Profaneneſs*, taſte any Delight in joining the harmonious Adorations of Heaven? How could the Lips, cankered with *Slander*, reliſh the Raptures of everlaſting Praiſe? Where would be the Satisfaction of the *vain Beauty*, or the *ſupercilious Grandee?* Since, in the Temple of the Skies, no Incenſe of Flattery would be addreſſed to the one; nor any obſequious Homage paid to the other. The tranſcendent, and immaculate Purity, of the bleſſed GOD, would *flaſh Confuſion* on the laſcivious Eye. And the envious Mind muſt be on a *Rack* of ſelf-tormenting *Paſſions*; to obſerve Millions of happy Beings, ſhining in all the Perfections of Glory, and ſolacing themſelves in the Fulneſs of Joy. In ſhort; the unſanctified Soul, amidſt holy and triumphant Spirits; even in the refined Regions of Bliſs and Immortality; would be like this melancholy Bird, *diſlodged* from her darkſome Retirement,

Retirement, and *impriſoned* under the Beams of Day *.

THE Voice of this Creature ſcreaming at our Windows, or of the Raven croaking over our Roof, is, they ſay, a *Token* of approaching *Death*. There are Perſons, who would regard ſuch an Incident, with no ſmall Degree of Solicitude. Trivial as it is; it would damp their Spirits, and, perhaps, break their Reſt.——One cannot but wonder, that People ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be affrighted at ſuch *fantaſtical*, and yet be quite unaffected with *real*, Preſages of their Diſſolution. Real Preſages of this awful Event,

* I cannot forbear taking Notice, with what admirable *Emphaſis* and *Propriety* our LORD touches this important Point, in his memorable Conference with *Nicodemus*. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, Except a Man be born again, He* CANNOT *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; q. d. "I wave the *Authority* "of the ſupreme Judge, and ſpeak with the in-"ſtructive *Condeſcenſion* of a Maſter in *Iſrael*. "Though I might, without being liable to the leaſt "Controul, paſs it into a ſovereign Decree; That "unrenewed Mortals, who are Slaves to corrupt "Appetite, SHALL NOT enter the Habitations of "the Juſt; I rather chooſe to repreſent it, as a "Caſe *utterly impoſſible*; and charge the Calamity "not upon *divine Severity*, but *human Folly*. Such "Perſons, from the very Nature of Things, pre-"clude themſelves; they incapacitate their own "Minds; and Contrarieties muſt be reconciled, be-"fore *They*, in their unregenerate Condition, *can* "be Partakers of thoſe ſpiritual and ſublime De-"lights." *John* iii. 3.

Event, addreſs us from every Quarter. What are theſe *incumbent Glooms*, that overwhelm the World, but a kind of *Pall* provided for Nature; and an Image of that long Night, which will quickly cover the Inhabitants of the whole Earth? What an Affinity has the Sleep *, which will very ſoon weigh down my drowſy Eye-lids, with that State of intire Ceſſation, in which all my Senſes muſt be laid aſide! The ſilent Chamber, and the Bed of Slumber, are a very ſignificant Repreſentative of the Land, where all Things are huſhed; all Things are forgotten.—What meant that deep *Death-Bell Note*, which, the other Evening, ſaddened the Air? Laden with heavieſt Accents, it ſtruck our Ears, and ſeemed to knock at the Door of our Hearts. Surely, it brought a Meſſage to ſurviving Mortals, and thus the Tidings ran: "Mortals, the Deſtroyer "of your Race is on his Way. The laſt Ene-"my has begun the Chace; and is gaining "Ground upon you, every Moment. His "Paths are ſtrewed with Heaps of Slain. Even "now, his Javelin has laid one of your Neigh-"bours in the Duſt; and will ſoon, very ſoon, "aim the *inevitable Blow* at every one of your "Lives."

We need not go down to the Charnel-Houſe; nor carry our Search into the Repoſitories of the Dead;

* Et Conſanguineus Lethi Sopor. Virg.

Dead; in order to find Memorials of our impending Doom. A Multitude of theſe Remembrancers are planted in all our Paths, and point the heedleſs Paſſengers to their long Home. I can hardly enter a conſiderable Town, but I meet the funeral Proceſſion, or the Mourners going about the Streets. The *Atchievement* ſuſpended on the Wall, or the *Crape* ſtreaming in the Air, are ſilent Intimations; that both *Rich* and *Poor* have been emptying their Houſes, and repleniſhing their Sepulchres. I can ſcarce join in any Converſation, but mention is made of ſome that are given over by the Phyſician, and hovering on the Confines of Eternity; of others, that have juſt left their Clay amidſt weeping Friends, and are gone to appear before the Judge of all the Earth. There's not a *News-Paper* comes to my Hand; but, amidſt all it's entertaining Narrations, reads ſeveral ſerious *Lectures* of *Mortality*. What elſe are the repeated Accounts, of Age, worn out by ſlow-conſuming Sickneſſes; and of Youth, daſhed to Pieces by ſome ſudden Stroke of Caſualty? Of Patriots, exchanging their Seats in the Senate, for a Lodging in the Tomb; of Miſers, reſigning their Breath, and (O relentleſs Deſtiny!) leaving their very Riches for others? Even theſe Vehicles of our Amuſement, are Regiſters of the Deceaſed; and

and the Voice of *Fame* ſeldom ſounds, but in Concert with a *Knell.*

THESE Monitors croud every Place; not ſo much as the Scenes of our Diverſions excepted. What are the Decorations of our public Buildings, and the moſt elegant Furniture of our Parlours; but the Imagery of Death, and Trophies of the Tomb? That marble Buſt; and thoſe gilded Pictures? how ſolemnly they *recognize* the Fate of others, and ſpeakingly *remind* us of our own! — I ſee; I hear; and Oh! I *feel*, this great Truth. It is interwoven with my Conſtitution. The frequent Decays of the Structure, foretel it's final Ruin. What are all the Pains, that have been darted through my Limbs; what every Diſeaſe, that has aſſaulted my Health; but the *advanced Guards* of the Foe? What are the Languors and Wearineſs, that attend the Labours of each revolving Day; but the more *ſecret Practices* of the Adverſary, ſlowly undermining the earthly Tabernacle?

AMIDST ſo many Notices, ſhall we go on thoughtleſs and unconcerned? Can none of theſe Prognoſtics, which are ſure as Oracles, awaken our Attention, and engage our Circumſpection? *Noah*, 'tis written, *being warned of GOD, prepared an Ark.* O! imitate this excellent Example. Admoniſhed by ſuch a Cloud of Witneſſes,

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neſſes, be continually putting thyſelf in a Readineſs for the laſt Change. Let not that Day, of which Thou haſt ſo many infallible Signs, come upon thee unawares. — Get the *Ivy untwined*, and thy Affections diſentangled from this inchanting World; that thou may'ſt be able to quit it, without Reluctance. Get the dreadful *Handwriting cancelled*, and all thy Sins blotted out; that thou may'ſt depart in Peace, and have nothing to fear at the deciſive Tribunal. Get, O! get thy Soul *intereſted* in the Redeemer's *Merits*, and *transformed* into his ſacred *Image*; then, ſhalt Thou be meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light, and may'ſt even deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with CHRIST.

SOMETIMES, in my Evening Walk, I have heard

> —— —— *The wakeful Bird*
> *Sing darkling, and, in ſhadieſt Covert hid,*
> *Tune her nocturnal Note* *.

How different are the *Airs* of this charming Songſter, from thoſe harſh and boding *Outcries!* The little Creature ran through all the Variations of Muſic; and ſhewed herſelf Miſtreſs of every Grace, that conſtitutes or embelliſhes Harmony.—Sometimes, ſhe ſwells a manly Throat, and

* MILT. Par. loſt, B. III. l. 38.

and her Song kindles into Ardor: the *Tone* is ſo *bold*, and ſtrikes with ſuch Energy, that you would imagine the ſprightly Serenader in the very next Thicket. Anon, the *Strain languiſhes*, and the mournful Minſtrel melts into Tenderneſs: the melancholy Notes juſt ſteal upon the Shades, and faintly touch your Ear; or, in ſoft and ſadly-pleaſing Accents, ſeem to die along the diſtant Vale. Silence is all Attention; and Night liſtens to the trilling Tale.

WHAT an Invitation is this, to ſlip away from the thronged City! This coy and modeſt Minſtrel entertains only the *Lovers* of *Retirement*. Thoſe that are carouſing over their Bowls, or ranting at the riotous Club, loſe this Feaſt of Harmony. In like manner, the Pleaſures of Religion; the Joy of Reconciliation with GOD; the Satisfaction ariſing from the unbounded, raviſhing, Proſpect of a bliſsful Immortality; theſe are all loſt to the Mind, that is ever *in the Croud*; and dares not, or delights not, to *retire into itſelf*.—Are we charmed with the Nightingale's Song? Do we wiſh to have it nearer, and hear it oftener? O let us ſeek a renewed Heart, and a reſigned Will; a Conſcience that whiſpers Peace, and Paſſions that are tuned by Grace; then, ſhall we never want a Melody in our *own Breaſts*, far more *muſically pleaſing*, than ſweet *Philomela*'s ſweeteſt Strains.

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How different are the *Airs* of this charming Songſter, from thoſe harſh and boding *Outcries!* The little Creature ran through all the Variations of Muſic; and ſhewed herſelf Miſtreſs of every Grace, that conſtitutes or embelliſhes Harmony.—Sometimes, ſhe ſwells a manly Throat, and

* MILT. Par. loſt, B. III. l. 38.

and her Song kindles into Ardor: the *Tone* is ſo *bold*, and ſtrikes with ſuch Energy, that you would imagine the ſprightly Serenader in the very next Thicket. Anon, the *Strain languiſhes*, and the mournful Minſtrel melts into Tenderneſs: the melancholy Notes juſt ſteal upon the Shades, and faintly touch your Ear; or, in ſoft and ſadly-pleaſing Accents, ſeem to die along the diſtant Vale. Silence is all Attention; and Night liſtens to the trilling Tale.

WHAT an Invitation is this, to ſlip away from the thronged City! This coy and modeſt Minſtrel entertains only the *Lovers* of *Retirement*. Thoſe that are carouſing over their Bowls, or ranting at the riotous Club, loſe this Feaſt of Harmony. In like manner, the Pleaſures of Religion; the Joy of Reconcillation with GOD; the Satisfaction ariſing from the unbounded, raviſhing, Proſpect of a bliſsful Immortality; theſe are all loſt to the Mind, that is ever *in the Croud*; and dares not, or delights not, to *retire into itſelf*.—Are we charmed with the Nightingale's Song? Do we wiſh to have it nearer, and hear it oftener? O let us ſeek a renewed Heart, and a reſigned Will; a Conſcience that whiſpers Peace, and Paſſions that are tuned by Grace; then, ſhall we never want a Melody in our *own Breaſts*, far more *muſically pleaſing*, than ſweet *Philomela*'s ſweeteſt Strains.

As different as the *Voices* of theſe Birds, are the *Circumſtances* of thoſe few Mortals, who continue awake.—Some are ſquandering, Pearls, ſhall I ſay, or Kingdoms? No; but what is unſpeakably more precious, Time. Squandering this ineſtimable Talent, with the moſt ſenſeleſs and wanton Prodigality. Not content with allowing a *few ſpare Minutes*, for the Purpoſe of neceſſary Recreation; they laviſh many Hours, devote *whole Nights*, to that idle Diverſion of *ſhuffling*, *ranging*, and *detaching*, a Set of painted Paſteboards. —— Others, inſtead of this buſy Trifling, act the Part of their own Tormentors. They even picquet themſelves *, and call it Amuſement; they are torn by wild Horſes, and yet term it a Sport. What elſe is the *Gameſter*'s Practice, while his Mind is held in the moſt *anxious Suſpenſe*, and agitated by the *fierceſt Extremes* of Hope and Fear? While the Dice are rattling, his Heart is throbbing; his Fortune is tottering; and, poſſibly, at the very next Throw, the one ſinks in the Gulph of Ruin, the other is hurried into the Rage of Diſtraction.

SOME, ſnatched from the Bloom of Health, and the Lap of Plenty, are confined to the *Chamber* of *Sickneſs*. Where they are conſtrained (O

* In Alluſion to a very painful Puniſhment, inflicted on Delinquents among the Soldiery.

(O ſad Alternative!) either to plunge into the everlaſting World, in an *unprepared Condition*; or elſe, to think over all the *Follies* of a heedleſs Life, and all the *Bitterneſs* of approaching Death. The Diſeaſe rages; it baffles the Force of Medicine, and urges the reluctant Wretch, to the Brink of the Precipice. While Furies rouſe the Conſcience, and point at the bottomleſs Pit below.—Perhaps, his *drooping Mother*, deprived long ago of the Huſband of her Boſom, and bereft of all her other Offspring; is, even now, receiving the Blow which conſummates her Misfortunes *. In vain ſhe tries to aſſwage the Sorrows

* This brings to my Mind one of the deepeſt and moſt affecting *Mourning-Pieces*, extant in Writeing. The ſacred Hiſtorian paints it in all the Simplicity of Stile; and yet in all the Strength of Colouring.—When *JESUS came nigh to the Gate of the City, behold! there was a dead Man carried out, the only Son of his Mother, and ſhe was a Widow.*—— What a beautful Gradation is here! Every freſh Circumſtance, is an additional Aggravation of the Calamity: Till, at length, the Deſcription is worked up into the moſt finiſhed Picture, of exquiſite and inconſolable Diſtreſs.—He was a *young Man:* cut off in the Flower of Life, amidſt a Thouſand gay Expectations, and ſmiling Hopes.—He was an *only Son*; the afflicted Mother's All: So that none remained to preſerve the Name, or perpetuate the Family. And, what rendered the Caſe ſtill more deplorable, *She was a Widow:* left intirely deſolate; abandoned to her Woes, without any to ſhare her

rows of a beloved Son; in vain, ſhe attempts, with her tender Offices, to prolong a Life, dearer than her own. He faints in her Arms; he bows his Head; he drops in Death. The laſt Pang, which diſlodges the unwilling Soul, rends an *only Child*, from the yearning Embraces of a Parent; and tears away the Support of her Age, from a diſconſolate Widow.

WHILE *Thoſe* long for a Reprieve; *Others* invite the Stroke. Quite weary of the World, with a reſtleſs Impatience, they ſigh for Diſſolution. Some, pining away under the *tedious Decays* of an incurable *Conſumption*; or gaſping for Breath, and almoſt ſuffocated, amidſt an *Inundation* of *dropſical Waters*. On ſome, a *relentleſs Cancer* has faſtened it's envenomed Teeth; and is gnawing them, though in the midſt of bodily Vigour, in the midſt of pitying Friends, gradually to Death. Others, are on a Rack of Agonies, by *convulſive Fits* of the *Stone*: Oh, how the Pain writhes their Limbs; how the Sweat bedews their Fleſh, and their Eye-balls wildly roll! Methinks, the Night condoles with theſe her diſtreſſed Children; and ſheds *dewy Tears*,

Sorrows, or comfort her under her Misfortunes.— Is not this a fine Sketch of the *Picturesque?* Who can conſider the Narrative, with any Attention; and not feel his Heart penetrated, with a tender Commiſeration? *Luke* vii. 12.

Tears, over their ſorrowful Abodes.—But, of all Mortals, *They* are the moſt exquiſitely miſerable, who groan beneath the Preſſure, of a *melancholy Mind*; or ſmart under the Laſhes, of a *reſentful Conſcience*. Though robed in Ermine; or covered with Jewels; the State of a Slave chained to the Gallies, or of an Exile condemned to the Mines, is a perfect Paradiſe compared with theirs.

O! that the *Votaries* of *Mirth*; whoſe Life is a continued Round of Merriment and Whim; would beſtow one ſerious Reflection, on this *Variety* of human *Woes*. It might render them leſs enamoured with the few languid Sweets; that are thinly ſcattered through this Vale of Tears, and are invironed with ſuch a Multitude of ragged Thorns. It might teach them, no longer to dance away their Years, with a giddy *rambling Impulſe*; but to aſpire, with a *determined Aim*, after thoſe happy Regions, where Delights, abundant and un-embittered, flow.

CAN there be Circumſtances, which a Man of Wiſdom would more earneſtly deprecate, than theſe ſeveral Caſes of grievous Tribulation? There are; and, what is very aſtoniſhing, they are frequently the Deſire and the Choice of Thoſe, who fancy themſelves the ſole Heirs of Happineſs: Thoſe I mean, who are launching out into the *Depths* of *Extravagance*, and running

exceſſive *Lengths* of *Riot:* who are proſtituting their Reputation, and ſacrificing their Peace, to their Luſts: who are ſapping the Foundations of their Health, in Debaucheries; and ſhipwrecking the Intereſts of their Families, in their Bowls: and, what is worſe, are forfeiting the Joys of an *eternal Heaven*, for the *ſordid* Satisfactions of the Beaſt; for the *tranſitory* Senſations of an Hour.——O! ye Slaves of Appetite, how far am I from envying your inordinate Revels! Ah! little are you ſenſible; that while Voluptuouſneſs ſhowers her Roſes, and Luxury diffuſes her Odours; they ſcatter *Poiſons* alſo, and ſhed an unheeded *Bane* *. Evils, incomparably more malignant, than the Wormwood and Gall of the ſharpeſt Affliction.—Since Death is in the Drunkard's Cup; and worſe than Poniards in the Harlot's Embrace; may it ever be the Privilege of the Man whom I love, to go without his Share of theſe *peſtilent Sweets* †!

ABUN-

* Yes; in the Flow'rs that wreathe the ſparkling Bowl,
Fell Adders hiſs, and pois'nous Serpents roll.
PRIOR's *Sol.*

† *Quam ſuave eſt ſuavitatibus iſtis carere!* — In this fine Sentence quoted from St. *Auguſtine*, there is much the ſame beautiful Turn, and noble Sentiment, as in thoſe Lines of Mr. *Pope:*

Count all th' Advantage proſp'rous Vice attains,
'Tis but what Virtue flies from, and diſdains.

ABUNDANCE of *living Sparks* glitter in the Lanes, and twinkle under the Hedges. I ſuppoſe, they are the *Glow-worms*; which have lighted their little Lamps, and obtained Leave, through the Abſence of the Sun, to play a feeble Beam. A faint Glimmer, juſt ſerves to render them perceivable; without tending at all to diſſipate the Shades, or making any Amends for the departed Day.—Should a Traveller, dropping with Wet, and ſhivering with Cold, hover round this *Mimickry* of *Fire*; in order to dry his Garments, and warm his benumbed Limbs: Should ſome unfortunate Rover; groping for his Way, in a black and dark Night; take one of theſe *languid Tapers*, as a Light to his Feet, and a Lantern to his Paths: How certainly would both the one, and the other, be fruſtrated of their Expectation!——And are *They* more likely to ſucceed, who, neglecting that ſovereign Balm, which diſtilled from the Croſs; fly to any *carnal Diverſion*, to heal the Anxiety of the Mind? Who, deaf to the infallible Deciſions of Revelation; reſign themſelves over to the erroneous *Conjectures* of *Reaſon*, in order to find the Way that leadeth unto Life? Or laſtly, who apply to the *Froth* of this vain World, for a ſatisfactory Portion, and a ſubſtantial Happineſs? Their Conduct is

in no Degree wiſer; their Diſappointment equally ſure; and their Miſcarriage infinitely more diſaſtrous. To ſpeak in the delicate Language of a ſacred Writer, "They ſow the Wind, and will "reap the Whirlwind *."

To ſay the Truth; the Pleaſures of the World, which we are *All* ſo prone to dote upon; and the Powers of fallen Reaſon, which *ſome* are ſo apt to idolize †; are not only vain, but treacherous. Not only a *painted Flame*, like theſe ſparkling Animals; but much like thoſe *unctuous Exhalations*, which ariſe from the marſhy Ground,

* Hoſ. viii. 7.

† I hope, it will be obſerved, That I am far from decrying that noble Faculty of Reaſon, when exerted in her proper Sphere; and acting in a *deferential Subordination* to the revealed Will of Heaven. While She exerciſes her Powers, within theſe appointed Limits, She is unſpeakably ſerviceable; and cannot be too induſtriouſly cultivated. — But, when She ſets up herſelf in *proud Contradiſtinction* to the Sacred Oracles; when, all arrogant and ſelf-ſufficient, She ſays to the Word of Scripture, *I have no Need of Thee:* She is then, I muſt be bold to maintain, not only a Glow-worm, but an *Ignis fatuus*; not only a Bubble, but a Snare.

May not this Remark, with the ſtricteſt Propriety; and without the leaſt Limitation; be applied to the *Generality* of our modern Romances, Novels, and *too many* of our theatrical Entertainments? Theſe are commonly calculated, to inflame a wanton Fancy: or, if conducted with ſo much Modeſty, as not to debauch

Ground, and often dance before the Eyes of the benighted Wayfaring Man. Kindled into a ſort of Fire, they perſonate a Guide, and ſeem to offer their Service: but, blazing with *deluſive Light*, miſlead their Follower into hidden Pits, headlong Precipices, and unfathomable Gulphs; where, far from his beloved Friends, far from all Hopes of Succour, the unhappy Wanderer is ſwallowed up, and loſt.

NOT long ago, we obſerved a very ſurpriſing Appearance in the Weſtern Sky. A *prodigious Star* took it's flaming Route thro' thoſe Coaſts; and trailed, as it paſſed, a tremendous Length of Fires, almoſt over half the Heavens. Some, I imagine, viewed the portentous Stranger, with much the ſame anxious Amazement; as *Belſhazzar* beheld the Hand-writing upon the Wall. Some looked upon it as a *bloody* * *Flag*; hung out by Divine Reſentment, over a guilty World. Some

debauch the Affections; they pervert the Judgment, and bewilder the Taſte. By their incredible Adventures; their extravagant Parade of Gallantry; and their Characters, widely different from Truth and Nature; they inſpire fooliſh Conceits: beget idle Expectations: introduce a Diſguſt of genuine Hiſtory; and indiſpoſe their Admirers, to acquieſce in the *decent* Civilities, or to reliſh the *ſober* Satisfactions, of common Life.

* —— *Liquida ſi quando nocte cometæ*
Sanguinei lugubre *rubent*. —— VIRG.

Some read, in it's glaring Viſage, the Fate of Nations, and the Fall of Kingdoms *. To others, it ſhook, or ſeemed to ſhake, *Peſtilence* and *War* from it's horrid Hair.——For my Part; I am not ſo ſuperſtitious as to regard, what every Aſtrologer has to prognoſticate; upon the Acceſſion of a *Comet*, or the awful Projection of it's huge *vapoury Train*. Nothing can be more precarious and unjuſtifiable, than to draw ſuch Concluſions from ſuch Events: Since they are neither *preternatural* Effects, nor do they throw the Frame of Things into any *Diſorder*. I would rather adore that omnipotent Being, who rolled thoſe ſtupendous Orbs from his creating Hand; and leads them, by his providential Eye, through unmeaſurable Tracts of Æther: Who bids them, now, approach the Sun, and glow with unſufferable Ardors †; now, retreat to the utmoſt Bounds of

* ——— *Crinemque timendi*
Sideris, & terris mutantem regna *cometem.*
LUCAN.

† "The Comet in the Year 1680, according to "Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Computation, was, in its "neareſt Approach, above 166 times nearer the "Sun than the Earth is. Conſequently, its Heat "was then 28000 times greater than that of Sum-"mer. So that a Ball of Iron as big as the Earth, "heated by it, would hardly become cool in 50000 "Years." *Derh. Aſtr. Theol.* p. 237.

of our Planetary Syſtem, and make their Entry among other Worlds.

THEY are harmleſs Viſitants. I acquit them from the Charge of cauſing, or being acceſſary to, deſolating Plagues. Would to GOD there were no other more formidable Indications of *approaching Judgments*, or *impending Ruin!* But, alas! when Vice becomes predominant, and Irreligion almoſt epidemical: when the Sabbaths of a jealous GOD are notoriouſly profaned; and that "Name, which is great, wonderful, and "holy," is proſtituted to the meaneſt, or abuſed to the moſt execrable Purpoſes: when the worſhip of the great Creator and Preſerver of Mankind is baniſhed, from many of the moſt *conſpicuous Families*; and it is deemed a Piece of rude Impertinence, ſo much as to mention the gracious Redeemer, in our *genteel Interviews:* when it paſſes for an elegant Freedom of Behaviour, to ridicule the Myſteries of Chriſtianity; and a Species of refined Converſation, to taint the Air with laſcivious Hints: when thoſe, that ſit in the *Scorner's Chair*, ſin with a high Hand; and many of thoſe that wear the *Profeſſor's Garb*, are deſtitute of the Power, and content themſelves with the mere Form of Godlineſs: when ſuch is the State of a Community, there is Reaſon, too apparent Reaſon, to be horribly afraid. Such *Phænomena*, abounding in the *moral World*, are not

not fanciful, but real Omens. Will not an injured GOD "be avenged on ſuch a Nation as "this?" Will He not be provoked to "ſweep "them with the Beſom of Deſtruction *?"

O! that the Inhabitants of *Great Britain*, would lay theſe alarming Conſiderations to Heart! The LORD of Hoſts has commanded the Sword of *civil Diſcord*, to return into it's Sheath: But have we returned, every one from his *evil Ways?* Are we become a renewed People; devoted to a dying Saviour; and zealous of good Works?—What mean thoſe *Peals* of *Sobs*, which burſt from the *expiring Cattle?*——What mean thoſe melancholy Moans, where the luſty Droves were wont to low †? What mean thoſe Arrows of untimely Death, diſcharged on our innocent and uſeful Animals? Are not theſe the Weapons of Divine

* *Iſa.* xiv. 23. The eternal Sovereign, ſpeaking of *Babylon*, denounces this Threatening, *I will ſweep it with the Beſom of Deſtruction.*——What a noble, but dreadful Image, is here! How ſtrongly and awfully pourtrayed! How pregnant alſo in its Signification! Intimating at once the *vile Nature*, the *total Extirpation*, of this wicked People; and the *perfect Eaſe*, with which the righteous GOD would execute his intended Vengeance.

† If theſe Papers ſhould be ſo fortunate, as to outlive their Author: perhaps it may be needful to inform Poſterity, that the above-mentioned Hints, allude to a moſt terrible, contagious, and mortal *Diſtemper*; raging, at the Time of writing them, among the *horned Cattle*, in various Parts of the Kingdom.

Divine Diſpleaſure, and manifeſt Chaſtiſements of a ſinful Generation *? Has not GOD, the "GOD to whom Vengeance belongeth," ſtill a Controverſy with our Land? And who can tell, where the Viſitation will end? What a Storm may follow theſe preluſive Drops? O! that we may "hear the Rod, and who hath appointed "it!" Taught by theſe *penal Effects* of our Diſobedience, may we remove the *accurſed Thing* from our Tents; our Practices; our Hearts! May we turn from all Ungodlineſs, before Wrath come upon us to the uttermoſt; before Iniquity prove our Ruin!

SOMETIMES, at this Hour, another moſt remarkable Sight amuſes the Curious, and alarms the Vulgar. A Blaze of lambent Meteors is kindled; or ſome very extraordinary *Lights* are refracted, *in the* Quarters of the *North*. Sometimes, the radiant Streamers meet and *mingle*; inſomuch, that the Air ſeems to be all conflicting Fire: At other times they *ſtart* from one another; and, like Legions in precipitate Flight, ſweep, each a ſeparate Way, through the Firmament.

* Hinc *lætis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis,*
Et dulces animas plena ad præſepia reddunt.
Balatu hinc *pecorum, & crebris mugitibus amnes,*
Arenteſque ſonant ripæ, colleſque ſupini. VIRG.

ment. Now, they are *quieſcent*; anon, they are thrown into a *quivering* Motion; preſently, a nimble Glance diffuſes them over the whole Hemiſphere. Sometimes, with an Aſpect *awfully ludicrous*, they repreſent extravagant and antic Vagaries; at other times, you would ſuſpect, that ſome inviſible Power was playing off the *Artillery* of the *Skies*, and giving us the Flaſh, without the Noiſe.

THE Villagers gaze at the Spectacle, firſt with Wonder, then with Horror. A general *Panic* ſeizes the Country. Every Heart throbs, and every Face is pale. The Crouds that flock together, inſtead of diminiſhing, increaſe the Dread. They catch Contagion from each other's Looks and Words; while Fear is in every Eye, and every Tongue ſpeaks the Language of Terror. Some ſee *hideous Shapes*, Armies mixing in fierce Encounter, or Fields ſwimming with Blood. Some foreſee *direful Events*, States overthrown, or mighty Monarchs tottering on their Thrones. Others, ſcared with ſtill more frightful Apprehenſions, think of nothing but the *Day* of *Doom*. "Sure, ſays one, the unalterable Hour is ſtruck, "and the End of all Things come.——See, re- "plies another, how the blaſted Stars look wan! "Are not theſe the Signs of the Son of Man, "coming in the Clouds of Heaven?——JESUS "prepare us, cries a Third, and lifts his Eyes

"in

" in Devotion, for the Archangel's Trump, and " the great Tribunal!"

If this *waving Brightneſs*, which plays innocently over our Heads, be ſo amazing to Multitudes; what inexpreſſible Conſternation muſt overwhelm unthinking Mortals, when the *general Conflagration* commences? The Day, the dreadful Day, is approaching, " *In the which the* " *Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe* *, " *and*

* 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. I have often thought this Verſe an eminent Inſtance of that kind of beautiful Writeing, in which the very *Sound* bears a ſort of *Significancy*; at leaſt, carries an exact Correſpondence with the Senſe. The original Expreſſion — ῥοιζηδον — is one of the hoarſeſt and deepeſt Words in Language. Nothing could be more exquiſitely adapted to affect the *Ear*, as well as impreſs the *Imagination*, with the Wreck of Nature, and the Craſh of a falling World.——I ſcarce ever read this Clauſe, but it brings to my Mind that admired Deſcription in *Milton*.

——— On a ſudden open fly
With impetuous Recoil, and *jarring Sound*,
Th' infernal Doors, and on their Hinges *grate*
Harſh Thunder. ——— Book II. l. 879.

It is a pleaſing Employ, and one of the nobleſt Offices of true Criticiſm, to point out theſe inferior Recommendations of the *Sacred Claſſics*. Though, I believe, the inſpired Writers themſelves, amidſt all the Elevation and Magnificence of their Divine Ideas, diſdained a ſcrupulous Attention to ſuch *little Niceties* of Stile.

" *and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat*;
" *the Earth alſo, and all the Works that are*
" *therein, ſhall be burnt up.*" That mighty Hand, which once opened the Windows from on High, and broke up the Fountains of the great Deep, will then unlock all the *Magazines* of *Fire*, and pour a *Second Deluge* upon the whole Earth. The vengeful Flames, kindled by the Breath to the Almighty, ſpread themſelves from the Centre of the Circumference. Nothing can withſtand their Impetuoſity; nothing can eſcape their Rage. Univerſal Deſolation attends their Progreſs. Magnificent Palaces, and ſolemn Temples, are laid in Aſhes. Spacious Cities, and impregnable Towers, are mingled in one ſmoaking Maſs. Not only the Productions of *human Art*, but the Works of *Almighty Power*, are Fuel for the devouring Element. The everlaſting Mountains melt, like the Snows which cover their Summit. Even vaſt Oceans, ſerve only to augment the inconceivable Rapidity and Fury of the Blaze.—O! how ſhall I, or others, ſtand undiſmayed amidſt the Glare of a *burning World*; unleſs the LORD JEHOVAH be our Defence? How ſhall we be upheld in Security, when the Globe itſelf is ſinking in a *fiery Ruin*; unleſs the Rock of Ages be our Support?

BEHOLD!

BEHOLD! a new Spectacle of Wonder! The *Moon* is making her Entry into the Sky. See her riſing in *clouded Majeſty:* All grand and ſtately, but ſomewhat ſullied in her Aſpect. However, ſhe *brightens*, as ſhe *advances*; and grows clearer, as ſhe climbs higher: Till, at length, her Silver loſes all it's Droſs; ſhe unveils her peerleſs Light, and becomes "the Beauty of "Heaven, the Glory of the Stars *;" delighting every Eye, and chearing the whole World, with the Brightneſs of her Appearance, and the Softneſs of her Splendors.—O! thou *Queen* of the *Shades!* may it be my Ambition, to follow this thy inſtructive Example! While others are fond to tranſcribe the *Faſhions* of *little Courts*, and to mimic Perſonages of inferior State; be it mine, to imitate thy *improving Purity!* May my Conduct become more unblemiſhed, and my Temper more refined; as I proceed, farther and farther, in my probationary Courſe! May every ſordid Deſire wear away, and every irregular Appetite be gradually loſt; as I make nearer Approaches, to the celeſtial Manſions! Will not this be a comfortable Evidence, that I too ſhall ſhine, in my adored Redeemer's Kingdom? Shine, with a *richer* Luſtre, than that which radiates from thy

* Ecclus. xliii. 9.
——— *Lucidum cæli decus.* HOR.

reſplendent Orb; ſhine, with an *unfading* Luſtre, when every Ray, that beams from thy beauteous Sphere, is totally extinguiſhed?

THE Day afforded us a Variety of entertaining Sights. Theſe were all withdrawn, at the Approach of Darkneſs. The Stars, kindly officious, immediately lent us their Aid. This ſerved to *alleviate* the *Frown* of Night; not to *recover* the Objects, from their *Obſcurity*. A faint Ray, ſcarcely reflected, and not from the intire Surface of Things, gave the ſtraining Eye a very imperfect Glimpſe; ſuch as rather mocked, than ſatisfied, Viſion.—But, now the Moon is riſen, and has collected all her Beams, the Veil is again taken off from the Countenance of Nature. We once again behold the World's great Picture; not indeed in it's late lively Colours, but more *delicately ſhaded*, and arrayed in *ſofter Charms* *.

WHAT a *majeſtic Scene* is here! How incomparably grand, and exquiſitely fine!—— The Moon, like an immenſe cryſtal Lamp, pendent in the magnificent Cieling of the Heavens. The Stars, like ſo many Thouſands of golden Tapers, fixed in their azure Sockets: all pouring their Luſtre

* ——— Now reigns
Full orb'd the Moon, and with more pleaſing Light
Shadowy ſets off the Face of Things. MILT.

Luſtre on ſpacious Cities, and lofty Mountains; glittering on the Ocean; gleaming on the Foreſt; and opening a Proſpect, wide as the Eye can glance, more various than Fancy can paint *. — We are forward to admire the Performances of human Art. A Landſchape, elegantly deſigned, and ſketched out with a maſterly Hand; a Piece of Statuary, that ſeems, amidſt all the Recommendations of exact Proportion, and graceful Attitude, to ſoften into Fleſh, and almoſt breathe with Life; theſe little *Imitations* of Nature, we behold with a pleaſing Surprize. And ſhall we be

* As when the Moon, refulgent Lamp of Night,
O'er Heav'n's clear Azure ſpreads her ſacred Light;
When not a Breath diſturbs the deep Serene,
And not a Cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn Scene;
Around her Throne the vivid Planets roll,
And Stars unnumber'd gild the glowing Pole;
O'er the dark Trees a yellower Verdure ſhed,
And tip with Silver ev'ry Mountain's Head;
Then ſhine the Vales, the Rocks in Proſpect riſe,
A Flood of Glory burſts from all the Skies:
The conſcious Swains, rejoicing in the Sight,
Eye the blue Vault, and bleſs the uſeful Light.
Iliad VIII.

I tranſcribe theſe Lines, becauſe Mr. *Pope* ſays, They exhibit, in the Original, the fineſt *Night-Piece* in Poetry. And, if they are ſo beautiful in *Homer*'s Language; who can ſuſpect their ſuffering any Diſadvantage, from the Pen of his admirable *Tranſlator?*

leſs affected, leſs delighted, with the inexpreſſibly noble, and completely finiſhed *Original?* —The ample Dimenſions of *Ranelagh*'s Dome; the gay Illuminations of *Vaux-Hall* Grove; I ſhould ſcorn to mention on ſuch an Occaſion, were they not the Objects of general Admiration. Shall we be charmed with thoſe *puny Eſſays*, of finite Ingenuity; and touched with no Tranſport, at this *ſtupendous Diſplay* of omnipotent Skill? at the auguſt Grandeur, and ſhining Statelineſs, of the Firmament? that forms an Alcove for Ten thouſand Worlds, and is ornamented with Myriads of everlaſting Luminaries. — Surely, this muſt betray, not only a total *Want* of *Religion*; but the moſt abject Littleneſs of Mind, and the utmoſt *Poverty* of *Genius*.

THE Moon, is not merely "an *Ornament* in "the high Places of the LORD;" but of ſignal *Service* to the Inhabitants of the Earth. — How uncomfortable is deep, pitchy, total Darkneſs! eſpecially, in the long Abſence of the Winter's Sun. Welcome therefore, thrice welcome, this auſpicious Gift of Providence; to enliven the nocturnal Gloom, and line with Silver the raven-coloured Mantle of Night! —— How deſirable to have our Summer-Evening illuminated! that we may be able to tread the dewy Meads, and breathe the delicious Fragrancy of

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our Gardens: eſpecially, when the ſultry Heats render it irkſome and fatiguing, to walk abroad by Day.—— How chearing to the *Shepherd*, the Uſe of this univerſal Lantern; as He tends his fleecy Charge, or late conſigns them to their hurdled Cots! How pleaſing to the *Mariner*, as he plows the Midnight Main; to adjuſt the Tackling, and explore his Way, under the Influence of this beaming Sconce!——For theſe, and other beneficial Purpoſes, the Hand of the ALMIGHTY has hung the *ſtately Branch* on high; and filled it with a Splendor, not confined to a ſingle Edifice, or commenſurate to a particular Square, but diffuſive as the whole Extent of the Hemiſphere.

THE moſt faithful of our inferior Servants, are ſometimes tardy in their Office; ſometimes negligent of their Duty: but this celeſtial Attendant is moſt *exactly punctual*, at all the ſtated Periods of her Miniſtration. If we chooſe to prolong our Journey, after the Sun is gone down; the Moon, during her whole *Increaſe*, is always ready to act in the Capacity of a Guide. If we are inclined to ſet out, very early in the Morning; the Moon, in her *Decreaſe*, prevents the Dawn, in order to offer her Aſſiſtance. And, becauſe it is ſo pleaſant a Thing, for the Eyes to behold the Light; the Moon, at her *Full*, by a Courſe of un-intermitted Wait-

ing, never fails to give Us, as it were, a double Day.—How apparently has the divine Wiſdom intereſted itſelf, in providing even for the *pleaſurable Accommodation* of Man! How deſirous, that He ſhould want no Piece of commodious Furniture; no Kind of delightful Convenience! And, in Proſecution of theſe benevolent Intentions, has annexed ſo valuable an Appendage to the terreſtrial Globe.——Juſtly, therefore, does the Pſalmiſt celebrate that admirable Conſtitution, which ordained *the Moon and the Stars to govern the Night*, as an Inſtance of rich Goodneſs; *of Mercy which endureth for ever* *.

THE Moon, it is confeſſed, is *no luminous Body*. All the Brightneſs, which beautifies her Countenance, is originally in the Sun, and no more than tranſmiſſively in her. That glorious Orb is the Parent of Day, and the Palace of Light. From thence, the Morning-Star gilds her Horn †; from thence, the Planetary Circles are

* Pſal. cxxxvi. 9.

† I might, to juſtify this Expreſſion, obſerve; that the Planet *Venus*, commonly called the Morning-Star, is found, by our Teleſcopes, frequently to appear *horned*; or to have a *Creſcent* of Light, ſomewhat like the Moon, a little before or after her Conjunction. But this would be a Remark, too deep and refined for my Scheme; which proceeds only upon a *ſuperficial* Knowledge, and the moſt *obvious* Appearances, of Nature.

are crowned with Luſtre; and from thence, the Moon derives all her Silver Radiance.——It is pleaſing to reflect, that ſuch is the Caſe with the *all-ſufficient Redeemer*, and his *dependent People.* We are repleniſhed from his Fulneſs. What do we poſſeſs, which we have not received; and what can we deſire, which we may not expect; from that never-failing Source of all Good? He is the Author of our Faith, and the Former of our Graces. In his unſpotted Life, we ſee the Path; in his meritorious Death, the Price; and in his triumphant Reſurrection, the Proof of Bliſs and Immortality. If we offend, and fall Seven times a Day; He is the LORD our *Peace* *. If we are depraved, and our beſt Deeds very unworthy; He is the LORD our *Righteouſneſs* †. If we are blind, and even brutiſh, in heavenly Knowledge; He is the LORD our *Wiſdom* ‡: his Word diſpels the Shades; his Spirit ſcatters the intellectual Gloom; his Eye looks our Darkneſs into Day. In ſhort, we are nothing, and "CHRIST is all." *Worſe* than *defective* in ourſelves, "we are *complete* in Him." So that if we ſhine, it is with delegated Rays, and borrowed Light. We act by a Strength, and glory in Merits, not our own.——O! may we be thoroughly ſenſible of our Dependence on the Saviour! May we conſtantly imbibe his pro-

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* Judg. vi. 27. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

pitious Beams; and never, by *indulging Unbelief*, or *backſliding into Folly*, withdraw our Souls from his benign Influences! Leſt we loſe our Comfort, and our Holineſs; as the fair Ruler of the Night loſes her Splendor, when her Urn is turned from it's Fountain *, and receives no more Communications of ſolar Effulgence.

THE Moon is inceſſantly *varying*, either in her Aſpect, or her Stages.——Sometimes, her Face is all Luſtre. Anon, a radiant Creſcent adorns her Brow. Soon, it dwindles into a ſlender Streak. Till, at length, all her Beauty vaniſhes, and ſhe becomes a beamleſs Orb.—— Sometimes, ſhe riſes with the *deſcending Day*; and begins her Proceſſion, amidſt admiring Multitudes. Ere long, ſhe defers her Progreſs till the *midnight Watches*; and ſteals, unobſerved, upon the ſleeping World.——Sometimes, ſhe juſt appears, on the *Edges* of the Weſtern *Horizon*; and drops us a ceremonious Viſit. Within awhile, ſhe ſets out on her nightly Tour, from the oppoſite Regions of the Eaſt; *traverſes* the whole *Hemiſphere*; and never offers to withdraw, till the more refulgent Partner of her Sway renders her Preſence unneceſſary.—In a Word, ſhe is, while

* Alluding to thoſe truly poetical Lines in *Milton*,

Hither, as to their Fountain, other Stars
Repairing, in their golden Urns draw Light.
Par. Loſt, B. VII. l. 364.

while converſant among us, ſtill waxing or waining, and " never continueth in one Stay."

SUCH is the Moon; and ſuch are all *ſublunary Things*; expoſed to perpetual Viciſſitudes. ——How often, and how ſoon, have the faint Echoes of *Renown* ſlept in Silence; or been converted into the Clamours of Obloquy! The ſame Lips, almoſt with the ſame Breath, cry Hoſanna and Crucify.——Have not *Riches* confeſſed their notorious Uncertainty, a Thouſand and a Thouſand times? Either melting away, like Snow in our Hands, by inſenſible Degrees; or eſcaping, like a winged Priſoner from it's Cage, with a precipitate Flight. —— Have we not known the *Bridegroom's Cloſet*, an *Antechamber* to the *Tomb*; and heard the Voice, that ſo lately pronounced the ſparkling Pair Huſband and Wife, proclaim an everlaſting Divorce; and ſeal the Decree with that ſolemn Aſſeveration, " Aſhes " to Aſhes, Duſt to Duſt?"——Our *Friends*, though the Medicine of Life; our *Health*, though the Balm of Nature; are a moſt precarious Poſſeſſion. How ſoon may the one become a Corpſe in our Arms; and how eaſily is the other deſtroyed in it's Vigour! — You have ſeen, no doubt, a Set of pretty *painted Birds*, perching on your Trees, or ſporting in your Meadows. You was pleaſed with the lovely Viſitants, that brought Beauty on their Wings, and Melody

lody in their Throats. But could you *enſure* the *Continuance* of this agreeable Entertainment? No, truly: At the leaſt diſturbing Noiſe, at the leaſt terrifying Appearance, they ſtart from their Seats; they mount the Skies; and are gone in an Inſtant, gone for ever. Would you chooſe to have a Happineſs, which bears Date with their Arrival, and expires at their Departure? If you could not be content with a Portion, that is ſettled only for ſuch a *fortuitous Term*, not of Years, but of Moments, O! take up with nothing earthly; ſet your Affections on Things above; there alone is "no Variableneſs or Sha-"dow of turning."

JOB, is not a more illuſtrious Pattern of Patience, than an eminent Exemplification of this Remark.——View him in his *private Eſtate*, he heaps up Silver as the Duſt; he waſhes his Steps in Butter; and the Rock pours him out Rivers of Oil.——View him in his *public Character*, Princes revere his Dignity; the Aged liſten to his Wiſdom; every Eye beholds him with Delight; every Tongue loads him with Bleſſings. —View him in his *domeſtic Circumſtances*, on one hand, he is defended by a Troop of Sons; on the other, adorned with a Train of Daughters; and on all Sides, ſurrounded by "a very great Houſ-"hold."—Never was human Felicity ſo conſummate; never was *diſaſtrous Revolution* ſo ſudden.

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The Lightning, which conſumed his Cattle, was not more terrible, and ſcarce more inſtantaneous. The joyful Parent is bereft of his Offſpring, and his "Children are buried in Death." The Man of Affluence is ſtript of his Abundance; and he, that was cloathed in Scarlet, embraces the Dunghill. The venerable Patriarch is the Deriſion of Scoundrels; and the late Darling of an indulgent Providence, is become "a Brother to Dra-"gons, a Companion of Owls."——Nor need we go back to former Ages, for Proofs of this afflicting Truth. In our Times; in all Times; the Wheel continues the ſame inceſſant Whirl: and frequently thoſe, who are *triumphing*, To-day, in the higheſt *Elevations* of Joy; To-morrow, are *bemoaning* the Inſtability of mortal Affairs, in the very *Depths* of Miſery *. — Amidſt ſo much Fluctuation and Uncertainty; how wretched is the Condition, which has no Anchor of the Soul,

* I believe, I may venture to apply, what the *Temanite* ſays of the Affairs of the Wicked, to all *ſublunary Things*; as a true Deſcription of their very *great Inſtability*. *Job* xxii. 16. נהר יוצק יסודם rendered by *Schultens*, *Fulmen fuſum fundamentum eorum*. *Their Foundation* (or what they reckon their moſt ſolid and ſtable Poſſeſſion) *is a Flood poured out*. ——Which is one of the *boldeſt Images*, and moſt *poetical Beauties*, I ever met with in any Language, ſacred or profane. In order to have a tolerable Conception of the Image, and a Taſte of it's Beauty; you muſt ſuppoſe a *Torrent* of Waters ruſhing in

Soul, ſure and ſtedfaſt? May thy Loving-kindneſs, O GOD, be our preſent Treaſure; and thy future Glory, our reverſionary Inheritance! Then ſhall our Happineſs, not be like the full-orbed Moon, which is "a Light that *decreaſeth* "in it's Perfection;" but like the Sun, when he goeth forth in his Strength, and knoweth no other Change, but that of *ſhining more* and more unto the perfect Day.

METHINKS, in this ever-varying Sphere, I ſee a Repreſentation, not only of our temporal Advantages, but alſo of our *ſpiritual Accompliſhments*. Such, I am ſure, is what the kind Partiality of a Friend would call *my Righteouſneſs*: And ſuch, I am apt to ſuſpect *, is the Righteouſneſs

broken Cataracts, and with impetuous Rapidity, from a ſteep and craggy Mountain. Then, imagine to yourſelf an *Edifice*, built upon the Surge of this rolling Precipice; that has no other *Baſis*, than one of thoſe *whirling Waves*, which conſtitute ſuch a headlong Stream —— Was there ever ſuch a Repreſentation of tranſitory Proſperity, tending, with inconceivable Swiftneſs, unto Ruin? Yet ſuch is every Form of human Felicity, that is not grounded upon JESUS, and a Participation of his Merits, which is the *Rock of Ages*; on JESUS, and his Image formed in our Hearts, which is the *Hope of Glory*.

* I would not be underſtood, as meaſuring, in this reſpect, *others* by *myſelf*; but as taking my Eſtimate, from the unerring Standard of Scripture. And indeed, proceeding on this Evidence, ſupported by this

teouſneſs of every Man living. Now we exerciſe it, in ſome few Inſtances; in ſome little Degrees. Anon, Sin revives, and leads our Souls into a tranſient, though unwilling Captivity. Now we are *meek*; but ſoon a ruffling Accident intervenes, and turns our Compoſure into a fretful Diſquietude. Now we are *humble*; ſoon we reflect upon ſome inconſiderable or imaginary Superiority over others, and a ſudden Elatement ſwells our Minds. Now, perhaps, we poſſeſs a *clean Heart*, and are warm with *holy Love*: But, O!

this Authority, I might have ventured farther than a bare *Suſpicion*. For, "there is not a *juſt* Man upon "Earth, that doth good, and *ſinneth not*;" ſays the Spirit of Inſpiration by *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* vii. 20.). —Nay, ſuch is the Purity, and ſo extenſive are the Demands, of the Divine Law, that an Apoſtle makes a ſtill more humbling Acknowledgment, "In "*many* Things we offend *All*." (*Jam.* iii. 2.)—— And the *all-wiſe Teacher*, who moſt thoroughly knew our Frame, directs the moſt advanced, moſt eſtabliſhed, and moſt watchful Chriſtians, to pray daily for the Forgiveneſs of their *daily Treſpaſſes*.— To which Teſtimonies, I beg Leave to add an elegant Paſſage from the *Canticles*; becauſe, it not only expreſſes the Sentiment of this Paragraph, but illuſtrates it by the very ſame Similitude. *She* (the Church) *is fair as the Moon*; *clear as the Sun*. Fair as the Moon, the leſſer and changeable Light, in her *Sanctification*: Clear as the Sun, the greater and invariable Luminary, in her *Juſtification*. The inherent Holineſs of Believers being imperfect, and ſubject to many Inequalities; while their imputed Obedience is every way complete, and conſtantly like itſelf. *Cant.* vi. 10.

O! how eaſily is the Purity of our Affections ſullied; how ſoon the Fervor of our Gratitude cooled! And is there not ſomething amiſs, even in our beſt Moments? Something to be *aſhamed* of, in all we *are*; ſomething to be *repented* of, in all we *do*?

WITH what Gladneſs, therefore, and adoreing Gratitude, ſhould we "ſubmit to the Righ-"teouſneſs of our incarnate GOD;" and *receive*, as a Divine *Gift*, what cannot be *acquired* by Human *Works* *!——A Writer, of the firſt Diſtinction, and niceſt Diſcernment, ſtiles the Obedience of our glorious Surety, an *everlaſting Righteouſneſs* †. Such as was ſubject to no Interruption, nor obſcured by the leaſt Blemiſh; but proceeded always, in the ſame uniform Tenor, of the moſt ſpotleſs Perfection.——This Righteouſneſs, in another Senſe, anſwers the Prophet's noble Deſcription; as it's beneficial and ſovereign Efficacy knows no End; but laſts through all our Life; laſts in the trying Hour of Death; laſts at the deciſive Day of Judgment; laſts through every Generation; and will laſt to all Eternity.

SOMETIMES, I have ſeen that reſplendent Globe *ſtript* of her *Radiance*; or, according to the emphatical Language of Scripture, "turned "into Blood." The Earth, interpoſing with it's

* Rom. v. 17.—x. 3. † Dan. ix. 24.

it's opake Body, intercepted the ſolar Rays, and caſt it's own gloomy Shadow, on the Moon. The malignant Influence gained upon her ſickening Orb; extinguiſhed, more and more, the Remainders of Light; till at length, like one in a *deep Swoon*, no Comelineſs was left in her Countenance; ſhe was totally *overſpread* with *Darkneſs*——At this Juncture, what a Multitude of Eyes were gazing upon the rueful Spectacle! Even of thoſe Eyes, which diſregarded the Empreſs of the Night; or beheld her with Indifference; when, robed in Glory, and riding in her triumphal Chariot, ſhe ſhed a ſofter Day through the Nations. But now, under theſe Circumſtances of Diſgrace, they watch her Motions with the moſt *prying Attention*; in every Place, her Misfortune is the Object of general Obſervation; and the prevailing Topic of Diſcourſe, in every Company.

Is it not thus, with Regard to *Perſons* of *Eminence*, in their reſpective Spheres! Kings at the Head of their Subjects; Nobles, ſurrounded with their Dependents; and (after Names of ſo much Grandeur, may I be allowed to add?) Miniſters, in their Pariſhes *; are each in a conſpicuous Station. Their Behaviour, in it's *minuteſt* Step, eſpecially in any *Miſcarriage*, will be

* Ye are the Light of the World. A City that is ſet on an Hill, cannot be hid. *Matth.* v. 14.

be narrowly ſurveyed, and critically ſcanned. Can there be a louder Call, to ponder the Paths of their Feet, and to be particularly jealous over all their Ways?—Thoſe, that move in inferior Life, may groſsly offend; and little Alarm be given; perhaps, no Notice taken. But it is not to be expected, that the leaſt Slip in their Conduct, the leaſt Flaw in their Character, will paſs undiſcovered. *Malice*, with her *Eagle-Eyes*, will be ſure to diſcern them; while *Cenſure*, with her *ſhrill Trumpet*, will be as far from concealing them; as *Calumny*, with her *treacherous Whiſpers*, from extenuating them. A Planet may ſink below the Horizon; or a Star, for ſeveral Months, withdraw it's Shining; and ſcarce one in Ten thouſand perceive the Loſs. But, if the Moon ſuffers a tranſient Eclipſe, almoſt half the World are Spectators of her Diſhonour.

VERY different was the Caſe, when, at this late Hour, I have taken a ſolitary Walk on the *Weſtern Cliffs*. At the Foot of the ſteep Mountain, the Sea, all clear and ſmooth, ſpread itſelf into an immenſe Plain, and held a watery Mirror to the Skies. Infinite Heights above, the Firmament ſtretched it's azure Expanſe; beſpangled with unnumbered Stars, and adorned with the Moon, "walking in Brightneſs *." She ſeemed to contemplate herſelf with a peculiar Pleaſure; while

* Job xxxi. 26.

while the *tranſparent Surface*, both received, and returned, her *Silver Image*. Here, inſtead of being covered with Sack-cloth, ſhe ſhone with double Luſtre; or rather, with a Luſtre multiplied, in proportion to the Number of Beholders, and their various Situations.

SUCH, methinks, is the Effect of an exemplary Behaviour, in Perſons of exalted Rank. Their Courſe, as it is nobly *diſtinguiſhed*, ſo it will be happily *influential*. Others, will catch the diffuſive Ray; and be ambitious to reſemble a Pattern, ſo attracting; ſo commanding. Their amiable Qualities, will not *terminate* in themſelves; but we ſhall ſee them *reflected* from their Families; their Acquaintance; their Retainers. Juſt as we may now behold another Moon; trembling in the Stream; glittering in the Canal; and diſplaying it's lovely Impreſs, on every Collection of Waters.

THE Moon, Philoſophy ſays, is a ſort of *Sovereign* over the *great Deep*. Her Orb, like a Royal Sceptre, ſways the Ocean, and actuates the fluid Realms. It ſwells the Tides, and perpetuates the reciprocal Returns of Ebb and Flow. By which means, the liquid Element purges off it's Filth; and is preſerved, from being putrefied itſelf, and from poiſoning the World.——Is the Moon thus *operative* on the vaſt Abyſs? And

ſhall not the *Faith* of eternal and infinite Delights to come, be equally efficacious on this Soul of mine?——Far above her argent Fields, are Treaſures of *Happineſs*, unſeen by mortal Eye; by mortal Ear unheard; and unconceived by any human Imagination. In that deſirable World, the moſt diſtinguiſhed *Honours* alſo are conferred; in Compariſon with which, the Thrones and Diadems of earthly Monarchs, are empty Pageants, and childiſh Toys. Yonder Arch of Sapphire, with all it's Spangles of Gold, is but the Floor of thoſe Divine Abodes. What then are the Apartments; what is the Palace? How bright with Glories; how rich with Bliſs?

O! YE Manſions of Bleſſedneſs; ye Beauties of my Father's Kingdom; that far outſhine theſe Lamps of the viſible Heaven; tranſmit your ſweet and winning Invitations to my Heart. *Attract*, and *refine*, all my Affections. Withhold them from *ſtagnating*, on the ſordid Shores of Fleſh; never ſuffer them to ſettle upon the Lees of Senſe; but impreſs them with *Emotions* of reſtleſs *Deſire*, after ſublime and celeſtial Joys. —Joys, that will proceed on in one everlaſting Flow, when Seas ſhall ceaſe to roll:—Joys, that will charm every Faculty with unimaginable Pleaſure; when the Moon, with her waxing Splendors, ſhall chear our Sight no more.

ENOUGH for the preſent Evening. My Thoughts have been ſufficiently exerciſed, and my Steps begin to be attended with Wearineſs. Let me obey the Admonition of Nature; and give Reſpite to my Meditations, Slumber to my Eyes.——But ſtay.——Shall I retire to the Bed of Sleep, with as little Ceremony, and with as much Inattention, as the Brutes to their ſordid Lair? Are no *Acknowledgments* due to that Divine Being, who has been the Support of my Life, and the Length of my Days? Have I no farther Need of his *protecting* Care; no more Occaſion for the Bleſſings of his Goodneſs?—— *Lepidus*, perhaps, may laugh at the bended Knee; and have a thouſand Darts of Rallery, ready to be diſcharged on the Practice of Devotion. The Wits, I know, are unmercifully ſevere on, what *they* call, the Drudgery of Prayer, and the fantaſtical Rant of Praiſe. Theſe they leave to the illiterate Labourer, and mean Mechanic; or treat them, with a contemptuous Sneer, as the Parſon's ignoble Trade.

Is it then an Inſtance of *ſuperſtitious* Blindneſs, to diſtinguiſh; or of *whimſical* Zeal, to celebrate; the moſt ſupereminent Merit? Is it an *ungraceful* Buſineſs; or does it argue a *groveling* Diſpoſition; to magnify Goodneſs, tranſcendently rich and diffuſive? Is it only for the *in-*

ferior Herd, to admire the moſt conſummate Excellence; only for *puſillanimous* Creatures, to maintain an Affiance on Almighty Power?—— What can be ſo truly becoming a *dependent State*, as to pay our adoring Homage, to the Fountain of Perfection; and profeſs our devoted Allegiance, to the ſupreme Governor of the Univerſe? Can any Thing more ſignificantly beſpeak an *ingenuous Temper*; or adminiſter a more real Satisfaction to it's fineſt Feelings; than the Exerciſes of penitential Piety? by which we give Vent to an honeſt Anguiſh; or melt into filial Sorrow; for our Inſenſibility to the beſt of Friends, for our Diſobedience to the beſt of Parents?——In a Word; can there be a more *ſublime Pleaſure*, than to dwell, in fixed Contemplation, on the Beauties of the eternal Mind; the amiable Author of all that is fair, grand, and harmonious; the beneficent Giver of all that is convenient, comfortable, and uſeful? Can there be a more *advantageous Employ*, than to preſent our Requeſts to the Father of Mercies; opening our Minds to the Irradiations of his Wiſdom, and all the Faculties of our Souls to the Communications of his Grace?——It is ſtrange, unaccountably ſtrange, that the Notion of *Dignity* in Sentiment, and the Purſuit of *refined* Enjoyment, ſhould ever be diſunited from *Devotion*. That Perſons, who make Pretenſions

to

to an improved Taſte, an exalted Genius, ſhould neglect this moſt ennobling Intercourſe, with the wiſeſt and beſt of Beings; the inexhauſtible Spring of Honour and Joy.

SHALL I be deterred, from approaching this Source of the pureſt Delight? Deterred, from purſuing this higheſt Improvement of my Nature? Deterred from all, by a *formidable* Banter; or confuted, by one *irrefragable* Smile?—No: let the Moon, in her reſplendent Sphere; and yonder Pole, with all it's ſtarry Train; witneſs, if I be ſilent Even or Morn. If I refrain to kindle in my Heart, and breathe from my Lips, the reaſonable Incenſe of Praiſe. Praiſe to that great and glorious GOD, who formed the Earth, and built the Skies; who poured from his Hand the watry World, and breathed the all-ſurrounding Air abroad.——"Thou alſo madeſt "the Night, Maker omnipotent! and Thou, "the Day! which I, though leſs than the leaſt "of all thy Mercies, have paſſed in Safety, "Tranquillity, and Comfort.——When I was "loſt in the Extravagance of Dreams, or lay "immerſed in the Inſenſibility of Sleep; thy "Hand recovered me from the temporary Le-"thargy, and ſtrung my *Limbs* with recruited "Vigour: thy Hand ſet a new, a delicately "fine Edge, on all my blunted *Senſes*: and "awakened my *Thoughts*, when benumbed, into

" Alacrity; reduced them, when diſconcerted,
" into Order: refitting me, at once, to diſ-
" charge the Duties of my Station; to reliſh
" the innocent Entertainments of an *animal*,
" and to enjoy the ſublime Gratifications of a
" *rational* Capacity.—When Darkneſs covered
" the Face of the Creation, at thy Command,
" the *Sun* aroſe, and darted it's Beams; painted
" the Flowers, and diſtinguiſhed every Object;
" gave Light to my *Feet*, gave Direction to
" my *Hands*, and gave Nature, with all her
" beautiful Scenes, to my *Eye*.—To Thee, O
" Thou GOD of my Life, I owe the *Continu-*
" *ance* of my Being, and the *Vivacity* of my
" Conſtitution. By thy ſacred Order, without
" any Conſciouſneſs of mine, the Wheels of
" Nature move within me, and the vital Foun-
" tain plays. *Impelled* by thy Power, the crim-
" ſon Current flows through innumerable Cha-
" nels; and never once miſſes it's Way; never
" once is interrupted in it's Courſe; when a
" ſmall Obſtruction, might be Diſeaſe; or the
" Burſting of a ſingle Artery, Death. *Over-*
" *ruled* by thy exquiſite *Skill*, it transforms it-
" ſelf, by the niceſt Operations of an inexpli-
" cable kind of Chemiſtry, into a Variety of
" the fineſt Secretions: which glide into the
" Muſcles, and ſwell them for Action; or pour
" themſelves into the Fluids, and repair their
" inceſſant

" inceſſant Decays: which cauſe Chearfulneſs
" to ſparkle in the Eye, and Health to bloom in
" the Cheek.

" *DISASTROUS Accidents*, injurious to
" the Peace of my Mind; or fatal to the Wel-
" fare of my Body; beſet my Paths, in formi-
" dable Ambuſh. But thy Faithfulneſs, and
" Truth, like an impenetrable Shield, covered
" my Head, and guarded me all around. Un-
" der this divine Protection, I walked ſecure,
" amidſt Legions of *apparent* Perils; and paſſed
" unhurt, through an unknown Multiplicity of
" *unſeen* Evils. Not one of my Bones was bro-
" ken; nora ſingle Shaft grazed upon my Eaſe;
" even when the Eye, that watched over me,
" ſaw, in it's wide Survey, *thouſands falling be-
" ſide me*, in irrecoverable Ruin; *and ten thou-
" ſands* deeply wounded by the Arrows, that
" flew *on my Right-hand*.—If *Sickneſs* has, at
" any Time, viſited my Chamber, or *Pain* har-
" rowed my Fleſh; it was a *wholſome* Diſcipline,
" and a *gracious* Severity. The Chaſtiſement
" proved a ſovereign Medicine, to cure me of an
" immoderate Fondneſs, for this imperfect trou-
" bleſome State; and to quicken my Deſires, af-
" ter the unimbittered Enjoyments of Eternity.
" —Has not thy Munificence, unwearied and
" unbounded, ſpread my *Table*; and furniſhed
" it, with the fineſt Wheat; repleniſhed it, with

" *Marrow* and *Fatneſs?* While Temperance " ſweetened the Bowl; Appetite ſeaſoned the " Diſh; Contentment and Gratitude crowned " the Repaſt.—Has not thy Kindneſs, O GOD " of the Families of *Iſrael*, preſerved my affec- " tionate *Relations*; who ſtudy, by their ten- " der Offices, to ſoften every Care, and heighten " every Joy? And given me valuable *Friends*, " whoſe Preſence is a Cordial, to chear me in " a dejected Hour; and whoſe Converſation " mingles Improvement with Delight?

" WHEN *Sin* lay lurking amidſt flowery " Scenes of Pleaſure; enlightened by thy Wiſ- " dom, I *diſcerned* the latent Miſchief; made " reſolute by thy Grace, I *ſhunned* the luſcious " Bane. If, through the Impulſe of Senſuality, " or the Violence of Paſſion, I have been hur- " ried into the Snare, and ſtung by the Ser- " pent; thy faithful Admonitions, have *recalled* " the fooliſh Wanderer; while the Blood of thy " Son, has *healed* his deadly Wounds. Some, " perhaps, have been cut off in the Midſt of " their Iniquities; and, to their inexpreſſible " Aſtoniſhment, tranſmitted from the Thrill- " ings of polluted Joy, to the Agonies of eter- " nal Deſpair: whereas, I have been diſtin- " guiſhed by long-ſuffering Mercy; and, in- " ſtead of lifting up my Eyes, in Torments, to " behold a Heaven irrecoverably loſt; I may

" lift

" lift them up under the pleaſing Views of being
" admitted, ere long, into thoſe Abodes of un-
" utterable Felicity.—In the mean time, Thou
" haſt vouchſafed me the *Revelation* of thy
" Will; the Influences of thy *Spirit*; and Abun-
" dance of the moſt effectual *Aids*, for advance-
" ing in Knowledge, and growing in Godlineſs;
" for becoming more conformable to thy Image,
" and more meet for thy Preſence; for taſting
" the ſacred Pleaſures of Religion, and ſecuring
" the unſearchable Riches of Heaven.

" How various is thy Beneficence, O Thou
" Lover of Souls! It has unſealed a thouſand
" Sources of Good; opened a thouſand Avenues
" of Delight; and heaped Bleſſings upon me,
" with a ceaſeleſs Liberality. If I ſhould at-
" tempt to declare them; they would be more
" than the *Stars*, which glitter in this unclouded
" Sky; more than the *dewy* Gems, which will
" adorn the Face of the Morning.

" And ſhall I *forget* the GOD of my Salva-
" tion, the Author of all my Mercies? Rather
" let my Pulſe forget to beat!—Shall I render
" Him *no Expreſſions* of Thankfulneſs? Then
" might all Nature reproach my Ingratitude.—
" Shall I reſt ſatisfied with the *bare Acknowledg-*
" *ment* of my Lips? No: let my *Life* be *vocal*,
" and ſpeak his Praiſe, in that only genuine,

" that

" that moſt emphatical Language——the Lan-
" guage of devout Obedience. Let the *Bill* be
" drawn upon my very Heart; let all my Af-
" fections *acknowledge* the Draught; and let the
" whole Tenour of my Actions, in Time, and
" through Eternity, be continually *paying* the
" Debt——the mighty Debt of Duty, Vene-
" ration, and Love.

" AND can I, O Thou Guide of my Go-
" ings, and Guardian of all my Intereſts——
" can I *diſtruſt* ſuch ſignal, ſuch experienced
" Goodneſs? *Thou haſt been my Helper*, thro'
" all the buſy Scenes of Day; *therefore*, *under*
" *the Shadow of thy Wings* will I repoſe myſelf,
" during the Darkneſs, the Danger, and Death-
" like Inactivity of the Night. Whatever Defile-
" ment I have contracted, waſh it thoroughly
" away, in redeeming Blood; and let neither
" the ſinful Stain, nor the ſinful Inclination, ac-
" company me to my Couch!——Then, ſhall
" *I lay me down in Peace, and take my Reſt*;
" chearfully referring it to thy all-wiſe Deter-
" mination, whether I ſhall open my Eyes in
" *this* World, or awake in the unknown Re-
" gions of *another*."

The E N D.

CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

STARRY HEAVENS.

There dwells a noble Pathos *in the Skies,*
Which warms our Paſſions, proſelytes our Hearts:
How eloquently ſhines *the glowing Pole!*
With what Authority it gives it's Charge,
Remonſtrating great Truths *in Style ſublime!*

Night-Thoughts, N° 9.

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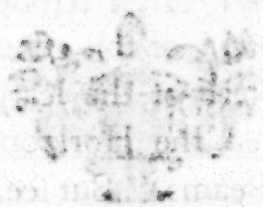
N. B. It may ſeem unaccountable to an *unlearned* Reader, that Aſtronomers ſhould ſpeak ſuch *amazing* Things; and ſpeak them with ſuch an Air of *Aſſurance*; concerning the Diſtances, Magnitudes, and Relations, of the Heavenly Bodies. But the *Exactneſs*, with which ECLIPSES

are

are foretold; the Inſtant of their *taking Place*, which is ſo preciſely determined; the Time of their *Continuance*, aſſigned even to the Nicety of a Moment; and all this, more than a *hundred*, or even a *thouſand* Years, before they happen; are moſt remarkable, and yet indiſputable Diſcoveries — Now theſe Diſcoveries being derived from Calculations, founded on thoſe very *Principles*; may demonſtrate to the *Common Senſe* of every Obſerver, that they are not mere Conjecture, or precarious Suppoſition only; but Matters of real *Fact*, and Points of undoubted *Certainty*.



CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

STARRY HEAVENS.

THIS Evening, I exchange the nice Retreats of Art, for the noble Theatre of Nature. Inſtead of *meaſuring* my Steps, under the *Covert* of an Arbour; let me *range* along the *Summit*, of this gently riſing Hill.—— There is no Need of the leafy Shade, ſince the Sun has quitted the Horizon, and withdrawn his ſcorching Beams. But ſee, how Advantages and Inconveniencies are uſually linked, and chequer our Affairs below! If the *annoying Heat* ceaſes, the *Landſchape*, and it's *pleaſing* Scenes, are alſo removed.——The majeſtic Caſtle, and the lowly Cottage, are vaniſhed together. I have loſt the aſpiring Mountain, and it's ruſſet Brow;

I look round, but to no purpoſe, for the humble Vale, and it's flowery Lap. The Plains, whitened with Flocks, and the Heath, yellow with Furze, diſappear. The advancing Night, has wrapt in Darkneſs the long-extended Foreſt; and drawn her Mantle, over the Windings of the Silver Stream. I no longer behold that luxuriant Fertility in the Fields; that wild Magnificence of Proſpect, and endleſs Variety of Images; which have ſo often *touched* me with *Delight*, and *ſtruck* me with *Awe*, from this commanding Eminence.

THE Loſs, however, is ſcarcely to be regretted; ſince it is amply compenſated, by the opening Beauties of the Sky. Here, I enjoy a free View of the whole Hemiſphere; without any Obſtacle from below, to confine the exploring Eye; or any Cloud from above, to overcaſt the ſpacious Concave. 'Tis true, the lively Vermilion, which ſo lately ſtreaked the Chambers of the Weſt, is all faded: But the *Planets*, one after another, light up their Lamps; the *Stars* advance in their glittering Train; a Thouſand and a Thouſand Luminaries, ſhine forth in ſucceſſive Splendors; and the whole Firmament is kindling, into the moſt beautiful Glow. The *Blueneſs* of the *Æther*, heightened by the Seaſon of the Year, and ſtill more enlivened by the *Abſence* of the *Moon*, give thoſe Gems of Heaven the ſtrongeſt Luſtre.

ONE

ONE Pleaſure more, the invading Gloom has not been able to ſnatch, from my Senſe. The Night rather improves, than deſtroys, the Fragrance which exhales from the *blooming Beans*. With theſe, the Sides of this ſloping Declivity are lined; and with theſe, the balmy Zephyrs perfume their Wings. Does *Arabia*, from all her ſpicy Groves, breathe a more liberal, or a more charming Gale of Sweets? And, what is a peculiar Recommendation of the rural Entertainments, preſented in our happy Land, they are alloyed by no Apprehenſions of Danger. No poiſonous Serpent lurks under the Bloſſom; nor any ravenous Beaſt, lies ready to ſtart from the Thicket.——But, I wander from a far more exalted Subject. My Thoughts, like my Affections, are too eaſily diverted from the Heavens, and detained by inferior Objects. Away, my Attention, from theſe little *Blandiſhments* of the *Earth*; ſince all the *Glories* of the *Sky* invite thy Regard.

WE have taken a Turn amongſt the *Tombs*, and viewed the ſolemn Memorials of the Dead: in order to learn the Vanity of mortal Things, and to break their ſoft Inchantment. —— We have ſurveyed the *Ornaments* of the *Garden*; not that the Heart might be planted in the Parterre, or take Root among the flowery Race: but that

theſe Delicacies of a Day, might teach us to aſpire after a better Paradiſe; where Beauty never fades, and Delight is ever in the Bloom.—— A Third time we lighted the Candle of Meditation; and ſought for Wiſdom, not in the crouded City, or wrangling Schools, but in the ſilent and lonely *Walks* of antient *Night* *.—— Let us once more indulge the contemplative Vein, and raiſe our Speculations to thoſe *ſublimer Works* of the great Creator; which the Regions of the Sky contain, and this duſky Hour unveils †.

IF we have diſcerned the Touches of his Pencil, glowing in the Colours of Spring; if we have ſeen a Sample of his Beneficence, exhibited in the Stores of Nature; and a Ray of his Brightneſs, beaming in the Blaze of Day; O! what an infinitely richer Field for the *Diſplay* of his *Perfections*, are the Heavens! The *Heavens*, in the moſt emphatical Manner, declare the Glory of GOD. The Heavens are nobly eloquent of the Deity, and the moſt magnificent Heralds

* Alluding to the ſeveral Subjects of the Three preceding Eſſays.

† Night opes the *nobleſt Scenes*, and ſheds an Awe,
Which gives thoſe venerable Scenes full Weight,
And deep Reception in th' entender'd Heart.
Night-Thoughts, N°. 9.

Heralds of their Maker's Praiſe. They ſpeak to the whole Univerſe; for there is neither *Speech* ſo *barbarous*, but their Language is underſtood; nor *Nation* ſo *diſtant*, but their Voices are heard among them *.——Let me then, while Multitudes are buried in Sleep, liſten to their ſilent Lectures. Perhaps, I may receive ſuch impreſſive Manifeſtations of "the eternal Power and "Godhead," as may *ſhed Religion* on my Soul, while I walk the ſolitary Shades; and may be a tutelary *Friend* to my *Virtue*, when the Call of Buſineſs, and the Return of Light, expoſe me again to the Inroads of Temptation.

THE *Iſraelites*, inſtigated by Phrenſy, rather than Devotion, worſhiped the Hoſt of Heaven. And the Pretenders to *Judicial Aſtrology* talk of, I know not what, myſterious Efficacy; in the different Aſpect of the Stars, or the various Conjunction and Oppoſition of the Planets.——Let thoſe, who are unacquainted with the ſure Word of Revelation, give ear to theſe Sons of Deluſion, and Dealers in Deceit: For my Part, it is Matter of Indifference to me, whether the Conſtellations ſhone with Smiles, or loured in Frowns, on the Hour of my Nativity. Let CHRIST be my *Guard*; and, ſecure in ſuch a Protection, I would laugh at their impotent Menaces. Let

* Pſal. xix. 3.

CHRIST be my *Guide*; and I ſhall ſcorn to aſk, as well as deſpair of receiving, any predictive Information from ſuch lifeleſs Maſſes.—— What! ſhall "the Living ſeek to the Dead *?" Can theſe Bodies advertiſe me of *future Events*, which are unconſcious of their *own Exiſtence?* Shall I have Recourſe to unintelligent, ſtupid Matter, when I may apply to that all-wiſe Being; who, with one comprehenſive Glance, diſtinctly views whatever is lodged in the Boſom of Immenſity, or forming in the Womb of Futurity? —Never will I ſearch for any *Intimations* of my *Fate*; but often trace my *Creator's Footſteps* †, in yonder

* Iſa. viii. 19.

† "It is moſt becoming (ſays a great Author) "ſuch imperfect Creatures as we are, to contem- "plate the Works of GOD, with *this* Deſign, that "we may diſcern the Manifeſtations of Wiſdom "in them; and thereby excite in ourſelves thoſe "devout Affections, and that ſuperlative Reſpect, "which is the very Eſſence of Praiſe, as it is a rea- "ſonable and moral Service."——*Abernethy on the Attributes.*—— And, indeed, if we are ſincerely diſpoſed to employ ourſelves in this excellent, this comprehenſive Duty, of praiſing the infinite Creator; the *Means*, and the *Motives*, are both at Hand. His Works, in a wonderful and inſtructive Variety, preſent themſelves; with *pregnant* Manifeſtations, of the moſt *tranſcendent* Excellencies of their Maker. They pour their Evidence from all Quarters, and into all the Avenues of the Mind. They invite us, eſpecially in the magnificent Syſtem of the Univerſe, to

yonder ſtarry Plains. In the former Caſe, they would be Teachers of Lyes; in the latter, they are Oracles of Truth. In this therefore, this Senſe only, I profeſs myſelf the Pupil of the Stars.

THE Vulgar, are apprehenſive of nothing more, than a Multitude of *bright Spangles*, dropt over the æthereal Blue. They have no higher Notion of theſe fine Appearances, than that they are ſo many *golden Studs*, with which the Empyrean Arch is decorated.——But ſtudious Minds, that carry a more accurate and ſtrict Inquiry among the celeſtial Bodies, bring back Advices of a moſt aſtoniſhing Import. Let me juſt recollect the moſt material of thoſe *ſtupendous Diſcoveries*; in order to furniſh out proper Subjects for our Contemplation. And let the Unlearned remember, That the Scene I am going to diſplay, is the Workmanſhip of that incomprehenſible GOD, who is "perfect in Knowledge, and mighty in "Power:" Whoſe Name, whoſe Nature, and all whoſe Operations, are "great and marvel-"ous:" Who ſummons into Being, with equal Eaſe, a ſingle Grain, or Ten thouſand Worlds.—

To

to contemplate —*Counſel*, conſummately wiſe; and *Execution*, inimitably perfect:—*Power*, to which nothing is impoſſible; and *Goodneſs*, which extendeth to All, which endureth for ever. — To give, not a full Diſplay, but only ſome *ſlight Strictures*, of theſe glorious Truths, is the principal Scope of the following Remarks.

To this if we continually advert, the Aſſertions, though they will certainly excite our *Admiration*, need not tranſcend our *Belief*.

THE Earth, is, in Fact, a *round* Body; however it may ſeem, in ſome Parts, to be ſunk into *Vales*, and raiſed into *Hills* *; in other Parts, to be ſpread into a ſpacious *Plain*, extending to the Confines of the Heavens, or terminated by the Waters of the Ocean. —— We may fancy, that it has deep *Foundations*, and reſts upon ſome prodigiouſly ſolid Baſis: But it is *pendent*, in the wide tranſpicuous Æther; without any viſible Cauſe, to uphold it from above, or ſupport it from beneath.—It may ſeem to be *ſedentary* in it's Attitude, and *motionleſs* in it's Situation:

* A learned Writer, I think, Dr. *Derham*, has ſomewhere an Obſervation to this Purpoſe.—That the loftieſt *Summits* of Hills, and the moſt enormous *Ridges* of Mountains, are no real Objection to the *globular* Form of the Earth. Becauſe, however they may render it, to our limited Sight, vaſtly uneven and protuberant; yet, they bear no more Proportion to the *intire Surface* of the terraqueous Ball, than a *Particle* of *Duſt*, caſually dropt on the Mathematician's Globe, bears to it's whole Circumference. Conſequently, the rotund Figure is no more deſtroyed in the one Caſe, than in the other.—On the ſame Principle, I have not thought it neceſſary to take any Notice of the comparatively ſmall Difference, between the *Polar* and *Equatorial* Diameter of the Earth.

Situation: but it is continually *ſailing* *, thro' the Depths of the Sky; and, in the Space of Twelve Months, finiſhes the mighty Voyage. Which periodical Rotation, produces the Seaſons, and completes the Year.—As it proceeds in the annual Circuit, it *ſpins* upon it's own *Centre*; and turns it's Sides, alternately, to the Fountain of Light. By which means the *Day* dawns in one Hemiſphere; while the *Night* ſucceeds in the other. Without this Expedient, one Part of it's Regions would, during half the great Revolution, be ſcorched with exceſſive Heat, or languiſh under an un-intermitted Glare: while the other, expoſed to the contrary Extremes, would be frozen to Ice, and buried under a long Oppreſſion of diſmal and deſtructive Darkneſs.

I cannot forbear taking Notice; that, in this compound Motion of the Earth, the one in no-wiſe *interferes* with the other, but both are perfectly *compatible*.—Is it not thus, with the Precepts of Religion, and the needful Affairs of the preſent Life; not excepting even the innocent Gratifications of our Appetites?—Some, I believe, are apt to imagine, that they muſt *renounce* Society, if they devote themſelves to CHRIST;

* With what amazing *Speed*, this Veſſel (if I may carry on the Alluſion) filled with a Multitude of Nations, and freighted with all their Poſſeſſions, makes her Way thro' the Ætherial Space; ſee Page 148. in Note.

CHRIST; and abandon all the Satisfaction of *this* World, if they once become zealous Candidates for the Felicity of *another*.—But this is a very miſtaken Notion, or elſe a very injurious Repreſentation, of the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs. It was never intended to drive Men into Deſarts; but to lead them, through the peaceful and pleaſant Paths of Wiſdom, into the bliſsful Regions of Life eternal. It was never intended to ſtrike off the Wheels of *Buſineſs*, or cut in ſunder the Sinews of *Induſtry*; but rather, to make Men induſtrious from a Principle of *Conſcience*, not from the Inſtigations of *Avarice*; that ſo, they may promote their immortal Happineſs, even while they provide for their temporal Maintenance. It has no Deſign to extirpate our Paſſions, but only to reſtrain their Irregularities; neither would it damp the Delights of Senſe, but prevent them from evaporating into Vanity, and ſubſiding into Gall.—A Perſon may be chearful among his Friends, and yet joyful in GOD. He may taſte the Sweets of his earthly Eſtate; and, at the ſame time, cheriſh his Hopes of a nobler Inheritance in Heaven. The *Trader* may proſecute the Demands of Commerce, without neglecting to negotiate the Affairs of his Salvation. The *Warrior* may wear his Sword; may draw, in a juſt Cauſe, that murderous Weapon; and yet be a good Soldier of JESUS CHRIST, and obtain

tain the Crown that fadeth not away. The *Parent* may lay up a competent Portion for his Children, and not forfeit his Title to the Treaſures, either of Grace or Glory.——So far is Chriſtianity, from obſtructing any valuable Intereſt, or with-holding any real Pleaſure; that it evidently advances the one, and improves the other. Juſt as the *diurnal* and *annual* Motions, are ſo far from *claſhing*, that they perfectly *accord*; and, inſtead of being deſtructive of each other, by mutually blending their Effects, they give Proportion and Harmony to Time, Fertility and innumerable Benefits to Nature.

To Us, that dwell on it's Surface, the Earth is by far the *moſt extenſive* Orb; that our Eyes can, any-where, behold. It is alſo cloathed with Verdure; *diſtinguiſhed* by Trees; and adorned with a Variety of beautiful Decorations. Whereas, to a Spectator placed on one of the Planets, it wears an *uniform* Aſpect; looks all luminous, and *no larger* than a Spot. To Beings, who dwell at ſtill greater Diſtances, it intirely diſappears.—That which we call, alternately, the Morning, or the Evening-Star; as, in one Part of her Orbit, ſhe rides foremoſt in the Proceſſion of Night; in the other, uſhers in and anticipates the Dawn; is a *planetary World*. Which, with the four others, that ſo wonderfully vary their myſtic Dance, are in themſelves

ſelves *dark* Bodies, and ſhine only by *Reflexion:* have Fields, and Seas, and Skies of their own: are furniſhed with all Accommodations for *animal* Subſiſtence, and are ſuppoſed to be the Abodes of *intellectual* Life. All which, together with this our earthly Habitation, are dependent on that grand Diſpenſer of divine Munificence, the Sun; receive their Light from the Diſtribution of his Rays, and derive their Comforts from his benign Agency.

THE *Sun*, that ſeems to perform it's daily Stages through the Sky, is, in this reſpect *, *fixed* and immoveable. 'Tis the great Axle of Heaven, about which the Globe we inhabit, and other more ſpacious Orbs, wheel their ſtated Courſes.———The Sun, though ſeemingly *ſmaller* than the *Dial* it illuminates, is abundantly *larger* † than this whole *Earth*; on which ſo many lofty Mountains riſe, and ſuch vaſt Oceans roll. A Line, extending from Side to Side, through the Centre of that reſplendent Orb, would meaſure more than Eight hundred thou-

* I ſay, *in this reſpect*; that I may not ſeem to forget, or exclude, the Revolution of the Sun round it's own Axis.

† A hundred thouſand times, according to the *loweſt* Reckoning. Sir *Iſaac Newton* computes the Sun to be 900,000 times bigger than the Earth. *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 749.

thouſand Miles: a Girdle, formed to go round it's Circumference, would require a Length of Millions: and, were it's ſolid Contents to be computed, the Account would even confound our Underſtanding, and be almoſt beyond the Power of Language to expreſs *.——Are we ſtartled at theſe Reports of Philoſophy? Are we ready to cry out, in a Tranſport of Surprize; How *mighty* is the *Being*, who kindled ſuch a prodigious Fire; and keeps alive, from Age to Age, ſuch an enormous Maſs of Flame?—Let us attend our philoſophic Guides, and we ſhall be brought acquainted with Speculations, incomparably more inlarged and amazing.

THIS Sun, with all it's attendant Planets, is but a very little Part of the grand Machine of the Univerſe. Every *Star*, though in Appearance, no bigger than a *Diamond*, that glitters upon a Lady's Ring; is really a *vaſt Globe*, like the Sun in Size, and in Glory; no leſs ſpacious, no leſs luminous, than the radiant Source of our Day. So that every Star is, not barely a World, but

* Dr. *Derham*, after having calculated the Dimenſions of the Planets, adds, "Amazing as theſe "Maſſes are, they are all far outdone by that ſtu-"pendous Globe of Light, the Sun; which, as it is "the Fountain of Light and Heat, to all the Pla-"nets about it, ſo doth it far ſurpaſs them all in it's "Bulk: It's apparent Diameter being computed at "822,148 *Engliſh* Miles, it's Ambit at 2,582,873 "Miles, and it's ſolid Contents at 290,971,000,006, "000,000." *Aſtro-Theol.* Book I. Chap. II.

but the *Centre* of a magnificent *Syſtem*; has a Retinue of Worlds, irradiated by it's Beams, and revolving round it's attractive Influence. All which are loſt, to our Sight, in unmeaſurable Wilds of Æther.—That the Stars appear like ſo many diminutive, and ſcarce diſtinguiſhable *Points*; is owing to their immenſe, and inconceivable *Diſtance*. Immenſe and inconceivable indeed it is; ſince a Ball, ſhot from the loaded Cannon, and flying with unabated Rapidity, muſt travel, at this impetuous Rate, almoſt Seven hundred thouſand Years *, before it could reach the neareſt of thoſe twinkling Luminaries.

CAN any Thing be more wonderful, than theſe Obſervations? Yes: There are *Truths*, far more *ſtupendous*; there are *Scenes*, far more *unbounded*. As there is no End of the Almighty Maker's Greatneſs; ſo no Imagination can ſet Limits to his creating Hand.——Could you ſoar beyond the Moon, and paſs through all the planetary Choir: could you wing your Way to the higheſt apparent Star, and take your Stand on one of thoſe loftieſt Pinacles of Heaven: you would, there, ſee *other Skies* expanded; *another Sun*, diſtributing his inexhauſtible Beams by Day; *other Stars*, that gild the Horrors of the alternate Night: and *other* †, perhaps nobler *Syſtems*, eſta-

* See *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 819.—Where the exact Computation is 691, 600 Years.

† See *Aſtro-Theology*, Book II. Chap. II.—— Where the Author, having aſſigned various Reaſons to

eſtabliſhed; eſtabliſhed, in unknown Profuſion, through the boundleſs Dimenſions of Space.— Nor does the Dominion of the great Sovereign terminate *there*. Even at the End of this vaſt Tour, you would find yourſelf advanced no farther, than the *Suburbs* of Creation; arrived only at the *Frontiers*, of the great JEHOVAH's Kingdom *.

ARE we ſtruck with Amazement, at this little *Sketch* of a very little *Part* of his Works? How then muſt we be loſt in Wonder, at the Con-

to ſupport this Theory of our *modern Aſtronomers*, adds— "Beſides (the fore-mentioned) ſtrong Proba- "bilities, we have this farther Recommendation of "ſuch an Account of the Univerſe, that it is far "*more* magnificent, and *worthy* of the infinite *Crea-* "*tor*, than any other of the narrower Schemes."

* *Job*, after a moſt ſublime Diſſertation, on the mighty Works of GOD; as they are ſcattered thro' univerſal Nature, from the Heights of Heaven, to the very Depths of Hell; cloſes the magnificent Account with this noble Acknowledgment; *Lo! theſe are Parts of his Ways*. Or, as the original Word more literally ſignifies; and may, I think, be more elegantly rendered; Theſe are only *the Skirts*, the *very outermoſt Borders*, of his Works. No more than a ſmall Preface to the immenſe Volume of the Creation. — From the *Hebrew* קצות — *Extremitates*—I cannot forbear thinking, on the *extreme* and very attenuated *Fibres* of the Root, when compared with the whole Subſtance of the *Trunk*; or on the *exquiſitely ſmall* Size of the *capillary* Veſſels, when compared with the whole Structure of the Body. Job xxvi. 14.

ſideration of the *CREATOR himſelf!* Who is ſo high; that He looks down on the higheſt of theſe dazling Spheres, and ſees even the Summit of Creation in a Vale: ſo great, that this prodigious Extent of Space, is but a Point in his Preſence; and all this *Confluence* of *Worlds*, as the *lighteſt Atom*, that fluctuates in Air, and diſports in the meridian Ray *.

O!

* This puts me in mind of a very fine Remark on a *ſcriptural Beauty*; and a ſolid *Correction* of the common *Tranſlation*; made by that learned, ſagacious, and devout Expoſitor *Vitringa*.—Iſa. xl. 15. We find it written of the Supreme Being, That *he taketh up the Iſles, as a very little Thing.* Which, our Critic obſerves, is neither anſwerable to the Import of the Original, nor conſonant to the Structure of the Diſcourſe. The Prophet had no Intention to inform Mankind, what the Almighty *could do*, with regard to the Iſlands, if he pleaſed to exert his Power: But his Deſign was to ſhew, how inſignificant, or rather what mere Nothings *they are*, in his Eſteem, and before his Majeſty.———The Iſlands, ſays he, though ſo *ſpacious*, as to afford Room for the Erection of Kingdoms, and the Abode of Nations; though ſo *ſtrong*, as to withſtand, for many Thouſands of Years, the raging and reiterated Aſſaults of the whole watery World; are yet, before the adored JEHOVAH, *ſmall* as the minuteſt Grain, which the Eye can ſcarce diſcern; *light* as the feathered Mote, which the leaſt Breath hurries away like a Tempeſt.—אִיִּים כַּדַּק יִטּוֹל *Inſulæ ſunt ut leve quid, quod avolat. The* deep-rooted *Iſlands are as the volatile Atom, which,* by the gentleſt Undulations of the Air, *is wafted to and fro in perpetual Agitation.*

O! THOU ſublime and incomprehenſibly glorious GOD, how am I overwhelmed with Awe, and ſunk into the loweſt Proſtration of Mind; when I conſider thy "*excellent Greatneſs*," together with my own *Littleneſs* and *Inſignificancy!*— Is there not moſt abundant Reaſon, to be even confounded at the Remembrance; that, exceſſively mean as I am, I ſhould ever entertain one *conceited Apprehenſion* of myſelf? ſhould feel the leaſt Elatement of Thought in the Preſence of ſo majeſtic and adorable a Being? — Were I poſſeſſed of all the *high Perfections*, that accompliſh and adorn the Angels of Light; yet, amidſt all theſe noble Endowments, I would fall down in the *deepeſt Abaſement* at thy Feet. Loſt in the infinitely ſuperior Blaze, of thy uncreated Glories; I would, even then, be annihilated in thy Preſence.—How much more ought I to maintain the moſt unfeigned Humiliation, before thy Divine Majeſty; who am not only Duſt and Aſhes, but a Compound of Imperfection and Depravity!

WHILE, beholding this vaſt Expanſe, I learn, that I am myſelf as Nothing; I would alſo diſcover the abject *Littleneſs*, which is in all *terreſtrial Things*.—What is the Earth, with all her oſtentatious Scenes, compared with this aſtoniſhing Furniture of the Skies? What, but a dim *Speck*, hardly perceivable in the *Map* of the

Univerſe? It is obſerved, by a very judicious Writer *, That if the Sun himſelf, which enlightens this Part of the Creation, was extinguiſhed; and all the Hoſt of planetary Worlds, that move about him, were annihilated; they would not be miſſed, by an Eye that can take in the whole Compaſs of Nature, any more than a Grain of Sand upon the Sea-ſhore. The Bulk of which they conſiſt, and the Space which they occupy, is ſo exceedingly little in compariſon of the Whole; that their *Loſs* would ſcarce leave a *Blank*, in the Immenſity of GOD's Works.—— If, then, not our Globe only, but this whole Syſtem, be ſo very diminutive; what is a Kingdom, or a County? What are a few *Lordſhips*, or the ſo much admired *Patrimonies* of thoſe, who are ſtiled Wealthy †? When I meaſure them with my own little Pittance, they ſwell into enormous Dimenſions. But, when I take the boundleſs Univerſe for my Standard, how ſcanty is their Size, how contemptible their Figure! They ſhrink into proud and *pompous Nothings* ‡.

WHEN the keen-eyed Eagle ſoars above all the feathered Race, and leaves their very Sight below:

* Spect. Vol. VIII N°. 565.

† *Juvat inter ſydera vagantem divitum pavimenta ridere, & totam tum auro ſuo terram.* SENECA.

‡ *Terrellæ grandia inania.* WATTS's Hor. Lyr.

below: when ſhe winds her towering Way up the Steep of Heaven; and, ſteadily gazing on the meridian Sun, accounts it's *beaming Splendors* all *her own*: Does ſhe then regard, with any Solicitude, the *Mote* that is flying in the Air, or the *Duſt* which ſhe ſhook from her Feet? And ſhall this eternal Mind of mine, which is capable of contemplating it's Creator's Glory; which is intended to enjoy the Viſions of his Countenance; ſhall this *eternal Mind*, endued with ſuch great Capacities, and made for ſuch exalted Ends, be ſo *ignobly ambitious*, as to ſigh for the Tinſels of State; or ſo *poorly covetous*, as to graſp after ample Territories on a Needle's Point?——O! no: While ſuch my Conſiderations, I feel my Sentiments expand, and my Wiſhes acquire a Turn of Sublimity. Such vaſt Surveys aſſimilate the Soul, and make her truly great. My throbbing Deſires after worldly Grandeur, die away; and I find myſelf, if not poſſeſſed of Power, yet ſuperior to it's Charms.—Too long, muſt I own, have my Affections been *pinioned* by Vanity, and *immured* in this earthly Clod. But theſe Thoughts break the *Shackles* *: Theſe Objects open the Door

* The Soul of Man was made to walk the Skies,
Delightful Outlet of her Priſon here!
There, diſincumber'd from her Chains, the Ties
Of Toys terreſtrial, ſhe can rove at large;

Door of *Liberty:* My Heart, fired by ſuch noble Proſpects, weighs Anchor from this little Nook; and coaſts no longer about it's contracted Shores; dotes no longer on it's painted Shells. The *Immenſity* of *Things*, is her Range; and an *Infinity* of *Bliſs*, is her Aim.

BEHOLD this immenſe Expanſe, and admire the *Condeſcenſion* of thy GOD.—In this manner, an inſpired and princely Aſtronomer, improved his Survey of the nocturnal Heavens. *When I conſider thy Heavens, even the Works of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained*; I am ſmitten with Wonder at thy Glory, and cry out in a Tranſport of Gratitude, *LORD, what is Man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou viſiteſt him* *? "How amazing, how charming, is that Divine "Grace, which is pleaſed to bow down it's *ſa-* "*cred Regards*, to ſo fooliſh and *worthleſs* a "*Creature!* Yea, diſdains not, from the Height "of infinite Exaltation, to extend it's kind pro- "vidential Care, to our moſt minute Concerns! "—But, that the everlaſting Sovereign ſhould "give

There freely can reſpire, dilate, extend,
In full Proportion let looſe all her Powers.
Night-Thoughts, N° 9.

* Pſal. viii. 3, 4.

" give his Son, to be our incarnate Saviour;
" what a Miracle is this of condeſcending Good-
" neſs! Or rather, What are all *Miracles*, what
" are all *Myſteries*, to this *ineffable Gift!*"

HAD the *brighteſt Archangel* been commiſſioned to come down, with the Olive-Branch of Peace in his Hand; and to ſignify his eternal Maker's Readineſs to be reconciled: on our bended Knees, with Tears of Joy, and a Torrent of Thankfulneſs, we ought to have received the tranſporting News. But when, inſtead of ſuch an angelic Envoy, He ſends His *only-begotten Son*; his Son beyond all Thought illuſtrious, to make us the gracious Overture: —— ſends Him from the " Habitation of his Holineſs and Glory," to put on all the innocent *Infirmities* of *Mortality*, and dwell in a Tabernacle of Clay: —— ſends Him, not barely to make us a *tranſient Viſit*, but to abide *many Years* in our inferior and miſerable World: — ſends Him, not to exerciſe Dominion over Monarchs, but to wear out his *Life* in the ignoble Form of a *Servant*; and, at laſt, to make his Exit under the infamous Character of a *Malefactor!* Was ever Love like this? Did ever Grace ſtoop ſo low *?—Should the

* This reminds me of a very noble Piece of *ſacred Oratory*, where, in a fine Series of the moſt beautiful Gradations, the Apoſtle diſplays the admi-

the Sun be ſhorn of all his radiant Honours, and degraded into a *Clod* of the Vallies; ſhould all the Dignities of Heaven be depoſed from their Thrones, and degenerate into *Inſects* of a Day; *great, great* would be the Abaſement. But *nothing*

rably condeſcending Kindneſs of our Saviour.—— *He thought it no Robbery*, it was his indiſputable Right, *to be equal with* the infinite, ſelf-exiſtent, immortal *GOD*. *Yet*, in Mercy to Sinners, *He emptied himſelf* of the incommunicable Honours, *and* laid aſide the Robes, of incomprehenſible Glory.—When He entered upon His mediatorial State, inſtead of acting in the grand Capacity of univerſal Sovereign, He *took upon him the Form of a Servant*. And not the Form of thoſe miniſtring Spirits, whoſe Duty is Dignity itſelf; who are throned, though adoring.—He took not on Him the Nature of Angels, but ſtooped incomparably lower. Aſſumed a Body of animated Duſt, *and was made in the Likeneſs of Men*; thoſe inferior *and* depraved Creatures. —Aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! but not ſufficient for the overflowing Richneſs of the Redeemer's Love. For, *being found in Faſhion as a Man, He humbled Himſelf* farther ſtill. Occupied the loweſt Place, where all was low *and* ignoble. He not only ſubmitted to the Yoke of the Divine Law, but alſo bore the Infirmities, and miniſtred to the Neceſſities, of Mortals. He even waſhed the Feet of others, and had not where to lay His own Head.—Yea, He carried His meritorious Humiliation, to the very deepeſt Degrees of poſſible Abaſement. He *became obedient unto Death*—And not to a common or natural Death, but a Death more infamous than the Gibbet; more torturous than the Rack—*even the* accurſed *Death of the Croſs*. Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

thing to Thine, moſt bleſſed JESUS; *nothing* to Thine, thou Prince of Peace; when for us Men, and for our Salvation, Thou didſt not abhor the coarſe Accommodations of the *Manger*; Thou didſt not decline even the gloomy Horrors of the *Grave*.

'TIS well, the ſacred Oracles have given this Doctrine, the moſt reiterated and inconteſtable Evidence. Otherwiſe, ſo prodigious a Favour muſt ſtagger our Belief.——Could HE, who *launches* all theſe planetary Globes, through the *illimitable* Void; and leads them on, from Age to Age, in their extenſive Career: could He reſign his Hands, to be *confined* by the girding Cord; and his Back to be *plowed*, by the bloody Scourge? —Could HE, who crowns all the Stars with inextinguiſhable *Brightneſs*; be Himſelf defiled with *Spitting*, and disfigured with the thorny Scar? It is the greateſt of *Wonders*, and yet the ſureſt of *Truths*.

O! YE mighty Orbs, that roll along the Spaces of the Sky; I wondered, a little while ago, at your vaſt Dimenſions, and ample Circuits. But now my Amazement ceaſes; or rather, is intirely ſwallowed up by a much more ſtupendous Subject. Methinks, your *enormous Bulk* is ſhrivelled to an *Atom*; your *prodigious Revolutions* are contracted to a *Span*; while I muſe upon the far more elevated Heights, and unfathom-

unfathomable Depths; the infinitely more extended Lengths, and unlimited Breadths, *of* this *Love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS* *.

WHILE I behold this vaſt Expanſe, I ſee a Mirror, that repreſents, in the moſt awful Colours, the Greatneſs of the Creator's Glory, and the *Heinouſneſs* of human *Guilt*.—*Ten thouſand Volumes*; wrote on purpoſe, to diſplay the Aggravations of my various Acts of Diſobedience; could not ſo effectually convince me of their inconceivable Enormity, as the Conſideration of that *all-glorious Perſon* †; who, to make an Atonement for them, ſpilt the laſt Drop of his Blood.—*I have ſinned*, may every Child of *Adam* ſay, *and what ſhall I do unto Thee, O Thou Obſerver of Men* ‡? Shall I give my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? Vain Commutation! and ſuch as would be rejected by the bleſſed GOD, with the

* Eph. iii. 18, 19.

† *Quo quiſque altius aſcendit in agnitione* CHRISTI, *eo profundius peccati atrocitatem cognoſcet.*

‡ Job vii. 20. Not *Preſerver*, as it ſtands in our Verſion, but *Obſerver of Men*. Which Phraſe, as it expreſſes the ſtrict and inceſſant *Inſpection* of the divine Eye; as it intimates the abſolute Impoſſibility, that any Tranſgreſſion ſhould *eſcape* the divine Notice; is evidently moſt proper, both to aſſign the *Reaſon*, and heighten the *Emphaſis*, of the Context.

the utmoſt Abhorrence.——Will all the *Potentates*, that ſway the Sceptre in a Thouſand Kingdoms, devote their ſacred and honoured Lives, to reſcue an obnoxious Creature from the Stroke of Vengeance? Alas! it muſt coſt more, vaſtly more, to expiate the Malignity of Sin, and ſave a guilty Wretch from Hell.—Will all the *Principalities* of *Heaven* be content to aſſume my Nature, and reſign themſelves to Death for my Pardon *? Even this would be too mean a Sa-

* *Milton* ſets this Thought in a very poetical and ſtriking Light.---All the Sanctities of Heaven ſtand round the Throne of the Supreme Majeſty. GOD foreſees and foretels the *Fall* of *Man*; the *Ruin*, which will unavoidably enſue on his Tranſgreſſion; and the utter *Impoſſibility*, of his being ever able to *extricate himſelf* from the Abyſs of Miſery.

He, with his whole Poſterity, muſt die;
Die he, or Juſtice muſt; unleſs for Him
Some Other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death.

After which affecting Repreſentation, intended to raiſe the moſt tender Emotions of Pity; the following Inquiry is addreſſed to all the ſurrounding Angels;

Say, heav'nly Pow'rs, where ſhall we find ſuch Love?
Which of you will be mortal, to redeem Man's

Satisfaction for inexorable Juſtice; too ſcanty a Reparation of GOD's injured Honour. So flagrant is human Guilt, that nothing, but a *Victim* of *infinite Dignity*, could conſtitute an adequate Propitiation.——*He* who ſaid, "Let there be "Light, and there was Light;" Let there be Firmament, and immediately the blue Curtains floated in the Sky; *He* muſt take Fleſh; HE muſt feel the fierce Torments of Crucifixion; and pour out his Soul in Agonies, if ever ſuch Tranſgreſſors are pardoned.

How vaſt is that Debt; which all the Wealth of both the *Indies* cannot diſcharge! How vitiated

Man's mortal Crime? and die, the Dead to ſave?
He aſk'd; but all the heav'nly Choir ſtood mute,
And Silence was in Heav'n. ——

There is, to me at leaſt, an inimitable Spirit and Beauty in the laſt Circumſtance.—That ſuch an innumerable Multitude, of *generous* and *compaſſionate* Beings, ſhould be ſtruck *dumb* with *Surprize* and *Terror*, at the very Mention of *The deadly Forfeiture and Ranſom ſet!* No *Language* is ſo eloquent as this *Silence*. Words could not poſſibly have expreſſed, in ſo emphatical a Manner, the *dreadful Nature* of the Taſk; the *abſolute Inability* of any or all Creatures to execute it; the ſuper-eminent and *matchleſs Love* of the eternal Son, in undertaking the tremendous Work; not only without Reluctance, but unſought and unimplored; with Readineſs, Alacrity, and Delight. *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book III. Line 209. Edit. BENTL.

vitiated that Habit of Body; which all the Drugs produced by Nature herſelf, cannot rectify! But how much more *ruined* was thy *Condition*, O my Soul! how much more *heinous* were thy *Crimes?* Since nothing leſs than the Sufferings and Death of Meſſiah, the Son of GOD, and radiant Image of his Glory, could *effect* thy *Recovery*, or *cancel* thy *Iniquity*.——Though, perhaps, thou art not ſunk ſo very deep in Pollution, as ſome of the moſt abandoned Profligates; yet remember the ineſtimable Ranſom, paid to redeem thee from everlaſting Deſtruction. Remember this; and "never open thy Mouth any "more *," either to *murmur* at the Divine Chaſtiſements, or to *glory* in thy own Attainments. Remember this; and even "*loath* thy-"ſelf† for the Multitude of thy Provocations," and thy great Baſeneſs.

ONCE more: Let me view this beautiful, this magnificent Expanſe; and conceive ſome juſter Apprehenſions, of the unknown *Richneſs* of my *Saviour's Atonement*.——I am informed by a Writer who cannot miſtake, that the High-Prieſt of my Profeſſion, who was alſo the Sacrifice for my Sins, is *higher than the Heavens* ‖; more exalted in Dignity, more bright with Glory, than

* Ezek. xvi. 63. † Ezek. xxxvi. 31.
‖ Heb. vii. 26.

than all the heavenly Manſions, and all their illuſtrious Inhabitants. If my Heart was humbled, at the Conſideration of it's exceſſive Guilt; how do all my drooping Powers revive, at this delightful Thought! The poor Criminal, that ſeemed to be *tottering* on the very Brink of the infernal Pit; is *raiſed*, by ſuch a Belief, even to the *Portals* of Paradiſe. My Self abaſement, I truſt, will always continue; but my Fears, under the Influence of ſuch a Conviction, are quite gone *. I do not, I cannot, doubt the Efficacy

* I am ſorry to find, that ſome of my Readers were a little diſguſted at this Expreſſion, "*My Fears* "*are quite gone.*" As thinking, it diſcovered a Tincture of Arrogance in the Writer, and tended to diſcourage the weak Chriſtian. But, I hope, a *more mature* Conſideration will acquit me, from *both* theſe Charges.---For, what has the Author ſaid? Only, that at ſome *peculiarly happy* Moments, when the Holy Ghoſt bears Witneſs of CHRIST in his Heart, and He is favoured with a Glimpſe of the Redeemer's matchleſs Excellency,—that, in theſe *bright Intervals* of Life, his trembling Fears, with regard to the deciſive Sentence of the great Tribunal, are turned into pleaſing Expectations. And what is there in ſuch a Declaration, offenſive to the *ſtricteſt* Modeſty, or diſpiriting to the *weakeſt* Believer? Inſtead of ſtriking Terror, it points out the Way of obtaining a *ſettled* Tranquillity. It's natural Tendency is, to engage the ſerious Mind in a *more conſtant* and *attentive* Meditation, on the unknown *Merits* of the Divine MEDIATOR. And were we more *thoroughly* acquainted, more *deeply* affected, with his unutterable Dignity; I am preſuaded,

ficacy of this Propitiation. *While I ſee a* Glimpſe, of it's matchleſs Excellency; and *verily believe* myſelf, intereſted in it's Merits; I know not what it is, to feel any miſgiving Suſpicions; but, am ſtedfaſt in Faith, and joyful through Hope.

BE my Iniquities like Debts of Millions of Talents, here is more than full Payment for all that mighty Sum. Let the Enemy of Mankind, and Accuſer of the Brethren, load me with Invectives, before the dreadful Tribunal; this one *Plea, a Divine Redeemer died*, moſt thoroughly quaſhes every *Indictment*. For, though there be much Turpitude, and manifold Tranſgreſſions, "there is no Condemnation to thoſe that "are in CHRIST JESUS."——Nay, were I chargeable with all the vileſt Deeds, that have been committed in every Age of the World, by every Nation of Men; even in this moſt deploreable Caſe, I need not ſink into Deſpair. Even ſuch Guilt, though grievous beyond all Expreſſion, is not to be compared with the *Abundance* of *Grace* and Righteouſneſs, which is in the *incarnate Divinity*. — How great, how tranſcendently glorious, are the *Perfections* of the adored JEHOVAH! So great, ſo ſuperlatively precious, is

perſuaded, our uneaſy Apprehenſions would *proportionably* vaniſh; our Faith be eſtabliſhed, our Hopes brightened, and our Joys inlarged.

is the *Expiation* of the dying JESUS. 'Tis impoſſible for the human Mind to *exalt* this Atonement *, too highly; 'tis impoſſible for the HUMBLE PENITENT to *confide* in it, too ſteadily. The Scriptures, the Scriptures of eternal Truth, have ſaid it (exult, my Soul, in the Belief of it!), that the Blood on which we rely, is GOD's *own Blood* †; and therefore all-ſufficient to expiate, omnipotent to ſave.

DAVID, that moſt egregious Sinner, but more exemplary Saint, ſeems to have been well acquainted with this comfortable Truth. What elſe can be the Import of that very remarkable, but

* This Doctrine, tho' rich with *Conſolation* to the ruined Sinner; yet, is it not likely to open a Door for *Licentiouſneſs*, and embolden Tranſgreſſors to proſecute their VICES?—No: It is the moſt powerful Motive to that *genuine* Repentance, which *flows* from an ardent Love of GOD; and *operates* in a hearty Deteſtation of all Sin, and an unfeigned Deſire to *abound* in the Works of Obedience. One, who knew the unmeaſurable Goodneſs of the LORD, and was no Stranger to the ſinful Perverſeneſs of our Nature, ſays, *There is Mercy with Thee:* THEREFORE *ſhalt thou be feared.* Pſal. cxxx. 4.—Words, full to my Purpoſe; which at once add the *higheſt* Authority to *this Sentiment*, and direct our Minds to its *genuine* Influence, and due Improvement.

† Acts xx. 28.

but devout Declaration, *Thou ſhalt purge me* * *with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean: thou ſhalt waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow?* —— " I " have been guilty, I muſt confeſs, of the moſt " complicated and ſhocking Crimes: Crimes, " inflamed by every aggravating Circumſtance, " with regard to Myſelf, my Neighbour, and " my GOD. Myſelf, who have been bleſſed " above Men, and the diſtinguiſhed Favourite " of Providence; my Neighbour, who, in the " moſt dear and tender Intereſts, has been irre- " parably injured; my *GOD*, who might juſtly " expect the moſt grateful Returns of Duty, in- " ſtead of ſuch enormous Violations of his Law. " Yet, all horrid and execrable as *my Offence* " is, it is nothing to the ſuperabundant *Merit* " of that *great Redeemer*, who was promiſed " from the Foundations of the World; in " whom all my Fathers truſted; who is the " Hope of all the Ends of the Earth. Though " my Conſcience be more *loathſome*, with adul- " terous Impurity, than the *Dunghil*; though

* Pſal. li. 7. *Thou ſhalt purge.* I prefer this Tranſlation, before the new one. Becauſe, this ſpeaks the Language of a more *ſtedfaſt Belief*, and gives the *higheſt Honour* to the Divine Goodneſs. Were the Words intended to bear no more, than the common *petitionary* Senſe; and not to be expreſſive of a noble *Plerophory* of *Faith*; they would rather have been— חטאני and כבסני *Imperatives*, not *Futures*.

" the moſt barbarous of Murders has rendered
" it, even *black* as the Gloom of *Hell*; yet,
" waſhed in 'the Fountain opened for Sin and
" for Uncleanneſs *,' I ſhall be — I ſay not,
" *pure only*, this were a Diſparagement to the
" Efficacy of the Saviour's Death; but I ſhall
" be fair *as* the *Lily*, and white *as* the *Snow*.
" Nay, let me not derogate from the glorious
" Object of my Confidence; cleanſed by this
" ſovereign Stream, I ſhall be *fairer* than the
" full-blown Lily, *whiter* than the new-fallen
" Snows."

POWER, ſaith the Scripture, *belongeth unto GOD* †.—And, in what majeſtic Lines, is this Attribute of JEHOVAH written, throughout the whole Volume of the Creation? Eſpecially, through thoſe magnificent Pages, unfolded in yonder ſtarry Regions. Which are therefore ſtiled, by the ſweet and ſublime Singer of *Iſrael*, " The " Firmament of his Power ‡." Becauſe, the grand *Exploits* of *Omnipotence* are there diſplayed, with the utmoſt Pomp; and recorded, in the moſt legible Characters.

WHO, that looks upwards to the midnight Sky; and, with an Eye of Reaſon, beholds it's rolling Wonders; can forbear inquiring, Of *what* were thoſe mighty Orbs *formed?* —— Amazing to

* Zech. xiii. 1. † Pſal. lxii. 11. ‡ Pſal. cl. 1.

to relate! They were produced without Materials. They ſprung from Emptineſs itſelf. The *ſtately Fabric* of univerſal Nature emerged out of *Nothing*.——What *Inſtruments* were uſed by the Supreme Architect, to faſhion the Parts with ſuch exquiſite Niceneſs, and give ſo beautiful a Poliſh to the Surface? With what were the various Pieces of the complicated Structure *cemented*; and how was all *connected* into one finely-proportioned, and nobly-finiſhed Whole?—— A *bare Fiat* accompliſhed all. LET THEM BE, ſaid GOD. He added no more; and immediately the marvelous Structure aroſe; adorned with every Beauty; diſplaying innumerable Perfections; and declaring, amidſt admiring Seraphs, it's great Creator's Praiſe. "By the *Word* of "the LORD were the Heavens made, and all the "Hoſt of them by the *Breath* of his Mouth *."

—What

* If this Thought is admitted a Second time, and ſuffered to ennoble the next Paragraph; it is partly, becauſe of it's unequalled *Sublimity*; partly, becauſe it awakens the moſt *grand Idea* of creating Power; and partly, becauſe the *Practice* of the *Pſalmiſt*, an Authority too great to be controverted, is my Precedent. — The beautiful Stanza quoted from *Pſal.* xxxiii. 6. is a Proof, how thoroughly the royal Poet entered into the *Majeſty* of the *Moſaic Narration*: The Repetition of the Sentiment, *ver.* 9. intimates, how peculiarly he was charmed, with that *noble Manner*, of deſcribing the Divine Operations: While the Turn of his own Compoſition ſhews, how perfectly

—What wonderful Force *fixed* ſome of thoſe vaſt Globes, on an immoveable Baſis? What irreſiſtible Impulſe *bowled* others, through the dark Profound? And what coercive Energy *confined* their impetuous Courſes, within the niceſt, ſtricteſt Bounds?—Nothing but his *ſovereign Will.* For all Things were at firſt conſtituted, and all to this Day abide, "according to his Ordinance."

WITHOUT any toilſome Aſſiduity; or laborious Proceſs; to raiſe—to touch—to *ſpeak* ſuch a Multitude of enormous Bodies into *Being*;—to *launch* them through the Spaces of the Sky, as an Arrow from the Hand of a Giant;—to impreſs on ſuch *unwieldy Maſſes* a Motion, far outſtripping the Swiftneſs of the winged Creation *;

—and

he poſſeſſed the ſame *elevated Way* of thinking. And this, long before *Longinus* wrote the celebrated Treatiſe, which has taught the Heathen, as well as the Chriſtian World, to admire the *Dignity of the Jewiſh Legiſlator's Stile.* Vide *Longin. de Sublim.* Sect. IX.

* To give *one* Inſtance of this Remark.—The *Earth*, in the diurnal Revolution, which it performs on its own Axis, *whirls about* at the Rate of above a Thouſand Miles an Hour. And, as the great Orbit, which it deſcribes annually round the Sun, is reckoned at 540 Millions of Miles, it muſt *travel* near a Million and Half, each *Day.*—What an *amazing Force* muſt be requiſite, to protrude ſo vaſt a Globe: and wheel it on, loaded as it is with huge Mountains, and ponderous Rocks, at ſuch a prodigious Degree of Rapidity. It ſurpaſſes human Conception!

—How

—and to *continue* them in the ſame *rapid* Whirl, for Thouſands and Thouſands of Years;—— What an aſtoniſhing Inſtance of infinite Might is this!—Can any thing be impoſſible to the LORD, the LORD GOD; the Creator and Controuler, of all the Ends of the Earth, all the Borders of the Univerſe? Rather, is not all that we count *difficult*, perfect *Eaſe* to that glorious Being, who only ſpake, and the World was made †? Who only gave Command, and the ſtupendous Axle was lodged faſt, the lofty Wheels moved complete?—What a ſure Defence, O my Soul, is this everlaſting Strength of thy GOD! Be this thy continual *Refuge*, in the Article of *Danger*; this thy never-failing *Reſource*, in every Time of *Need*.

WHAT cannot this uncontroulable Power, of the great JEHOVAH, effect for his People? Be their Miſeries ever ſo galling, cannot this GOD relieve them? Be their Wants ever ſo numerous, cannot this GOD ſupply them? Be their Corruptions within, ever ſo inveterate; or their Temptations without, ever ſo importunate; cannot this mighty, mighty GOD ſubdue the one,

—How natural, how pertinent, how almoſt neceſſary, after ſuch an Obſervation, is the Acknowledgment made by holy *Job! I know that* THOU *canſt do every Thing, and that no Thought can be withholden from thee.* Chap. xlii. 2.

† Pſal. xxxiii. 9.

and fortify them againſt the other? — Should *Trials*, with an inceſſant Vehemence, *ſift* thee as Wheat; ſhould *Tribulation*, with a Weight of Woes, almoſt *grind* thee to Powder; ſhould *Pleaſure*, with her bewitching Smiles, ſolicit thee to *delicious Ruin*; yet, "hold thee faſt by GOD," and lay thy Help upon Him that is omnipotent *. Thou canſt not be involved in ſuch *calamitous Cir-*

* It is a moſt *charming Deſcription*, as well as *comfortable Promiſe*, which we find in *Iſa.* xl. 29, 30, 31.—*HE giveth Power to the Feeble; and to them that have no Might* at all, *He* not only impart-eth, but *increaſeth Strength*; making it to abound, where it did not ſo much as exiſt. — Without this Aid of JEHOVAH, *even the Youths*, in the very Prime of their Vigour and Activity, *ſhall become languid* in their Work, *and weary* in their Courſe. *And the young Men*, to whoſe Reſolution and Abilities nothing ſeemed impracticable, *ſhall* not only not ſucceed, but *utterly fall*, and miſcarry in their Enterprizes.—— *Whereas, they that wait upon the LORD*, and rely on his Grace, ſhall preſs on, with a generous Ardor, from one Degree of religious Improvement to another: inſtead of exhauſting, they *ſhall renew their Strength*; Difficulties ſhall animate, and Toil invigorate them; *they ſhall mount up*, as *with* ſoaring *Wings*, above all Oppoſition; they ſhall be carried through every Diſcouragement, *as Eagles* cleave the yielding Air: *They ſhall run*, with Speed and Alacrity, the Way of GOD's Commandments, *and not be weary: They ſhall hold on*, with Conſtancy and Perſeverance, in thoſe peaceful Paths, *and not faint*; but arrive at the End of their Progreſs, and win the Prize of their High Calling.

To

Circumſtances, or expoſed to ſuch *imminent Peril*; but thy GOD, whom thou ſerveſt, is able to ſupport thee under the one, and to deliver thee from the other. — To *ſupport!* to *deliver!* O, let me not diſhonour the unlimited Greatneſs of his Power. He is able to exalt Thee, from the *deepeſt Diſtreſs*, to the moſt *triumphant Joy*; and to make even a *Complication* of Evils, *work together* for thy everlaſting Good. *He is able*, not only to accompliſh what I have been ſpeak-

To this moſt chearing Doctrine, permit me to add it's no leſs *beautiful* and *delightful Contraſt*. *Eliphaz*, ſpeaking of the Enemies of the Righteous, ſays — לא נכחד קימנו — which is rendered by a great Critic in ſacred Learning, *Nihil exciſum factio nobis adverſaria*.—We ſhould reckon, our Language acquitted itſelf tolerably well, if, when depretiating the Abilities of an Adverſary, it ſhould repreſent them weak as the *ſcorched Thread*, feeble as the *diſſolving Smoke*. But theſe are cold Forms of Speech, compared with the Eloquence of the Eaſt. According to the Genius of our Bible, *All the Power, that oppoſes the Godly, is* a mere Nothing, ; or, to ſpeak with a more emphatical Air of Contempt, *a deſtroyed, an extirpated Nothing*.---- *Admire this Expreſſion*, ye that are charmed with daring Images, and (what *Tully* calls *verbum ardens*) a ſpirited and glowing Diction.---- *Remember* this *Declaration*, ye that fight the good Fight of Faith. The *united Force* of all your Enemies, be it ever ſo *formidable* to the Eye of Fleſh, is, before your Almighty Guardian, *Nihil nihiliſſimum*, not only Nothing, but *leſs than Nothing*, and Vanity. *Job* xxii. 20.

ing, but *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can aſk, or think* *.

O! THE *wretched Condition* of the Wicked, who have this LORD of all Power for their Enemy! O! the *deſperate Madneſs* of the Ungodly, who provoke the Almighty to Jealouſy! — Beſotted Creatures! are you able to contend with your Maker, and enter the Liſts againſt incenſed Omnipotence? Can you *bear* the Fierceneſs of his Wrath, or ſuſtain the Vengeance of his lifted Arm? At his Preſence, though awfully ſerene, the Hills melt like Wax, and the "Mountains "ſkip like frighted Lambs." At the leaſt Intimations

* I ſhould, in this Place, avoid ſwelling the Notes any farther, was it not to take Notice of the inimitable Paſſage quoted above, and to be found *Eph.* iii. 20.—Which, if I do not greatly miſtake, is the moſt noble Repreſentation of Divine Power, that it is poſſible for Words to frame. — To do all that our Tongue can *aſk*, is a Miracle of Might. But we often think more than we can expreſs, and are actuated with "*Groanings unutterable.*" Yet, to anſwer theſe vaſt Deſires, is not beyond the Accompliſhment of our heavenly Father. — Nay, to make all manner of Bleſſings commenſurate to the *largeſt Stretch* of human Expectations, is a *ſmall Thing* with the GOD of Glory. He is able to do *above all*, that the moſt inlarged Apprehenſion can imagine; yea, to do *abundantly* more, *exceeding abundantly* more, than the Mind itſelf, in the *utmoſt Exertion* of it's Faculties, is capable of *wiſhing*, or knows how to *conceive*.

timations of his Diſpleaſure, the Foundations of Nature rock, and the " Pillars of Heaven " tremble." How then can a *withered Leaf* endure, when " his Lips are full of Indignation, " and his Tongue as a devouring Fire?"—— Or can any thing *ſcreen* a guilty Worm, when the great and terrible GOD ſhall *whet his glittering Sword, and his Hand take hold on* inexorable *Judgment?* When *that Hand*, which ſhoots the Planets, Maſſes of exceſſive Bulk *, with ſuch ſurpriſing Celerity, through the Sky: *that Hand*, which darts the Comets to ſuch unmeaſurable Diſtances, beyond the Orbit of our remoteſt Planet, beyond the Purſuit of the ſtrongeſt Eye: when THAT HAND is ſtretched out to *puniſh*, can the Munition of Rocks, the Intervention of Seas, or even interpoſing Worlds, *divert* the Blow?— Conſider this, *Ambition*; and bow thy haughty Creſt. Conſider this, *Diſobedience*; and bend thy iron Sinew. O! conſider this, all ye that forget, or affront, the tremendous JEHOVAH. He can, by a ſingle Act of his Will,

* One of the Planets *(Saturn)* is ſuppoſed to be 427,218,300,000,000 Miles in Bulk. The largeſt of the Planets *(Jupiter)* is computed at 920,011, 200,000,000 Miles. — Such enormous Magnitude! winged with ſuch prodigious Speed!—It raiſes Aſtoniſhmen tbeyond Expreſſion—*With GOD is terrible Majeſty!* Job xxxvii. 22.—*Who ſhall not fear* THEE, O LORD, *and glorify thy Name?* Rev. xv. 4.

Will, lay the *Univerſe* in utter Ruin: and can he want Power to bring *you*, in a Moment, to the Duſt of Death, or to the Flames of Hell? He has,—I ſay not, ten thouſand Lightnings to ſcorch you to Aſhes; ten thouſand Thunders to cruſh you into Atoms; but, what is unſpeakably more dreadful,—He has an *Army* of *Terrors*, even in the *Look* of his angry *Countenance:* His very Frown is worſe than Deſtruction.

I CANNOT diſmiſs this Subject, without admiring the *Patience* of the bleſſed GOD. Who, though ſo "ſtrong and powerful, yet is provoked "every Day."—Surely, as is his Majeſty, ſo is his Mercy; his Pity altogether commenſurate to his Power. If I *vilify* but the *Name* of an earthly Monarch; I loſe my Liberty, and am confined to the Dungeon. If I *appear* in *Arms*, and draw the Sword, againſt my national Sovereign; my Life is forfeited, and my very Blood will ſcarce atone for the Crime. But Thee I have diſhonoured, O! thou King immortal and inviſible! againſt Thee my Breaſt has cheriſhed *ſecret Diſaffection*; my Behaviour has riſen up in *open Rebellion*; and yet I am ſpared, I am preſerved. Inſtead of being baniſhed from thy Preſence; I ſit at thy Table, and am fed from thy Hand. Inſtead of *purſuing* me with *Thunderbolts* of Vengeance, thy *Favours ſurround* me on every Side. That Arm, that injured Arm, which might

might juſtly fall, with irretrievable Ruin, on a Traitor's Head; is moſt graciouſly ſtretched out, to careſs him, with the tendereſt Endearments; to cheriſh him, with every Inſtance of parental Kindneſs.—O! thou mightieſt, thou beſt of Beings, how am I pained at my very Soul, for ſuch ſhameful and odious Diſingenuity! Let me always abominate myſelf, as the baſeſt of Creatures; but *adore* that unwearied Long-ſuffering of thine, which refuſes to be irritated; *love* that unremitted Goodneſs, which no Acts of Ingratitude could ſtop, or ſo much as check, in it's gracious Current. O! let this *ſtubborn Heart*; which Duty could not bind; which Threatenings could not awe; be the Captive, the *willing Captive*, of ſuch triumphant Beneficence.

I HAVE often been ſtruck with Wonder at that Almighty Skill, which *weighed* the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance; which *proportioned* the Waters in the Hollow of it's Hand, and *adjuſted* the Duſt of the Earth * by

* *The Duſt of the Earth*, in this ſublime Scripture, ſignifies the *dry Land*, or *ſolid* Part of our Globe. Which is placed in Contradiſtinction to the whole Collection of *fluid* Matter, mentioned in the preceding Clauſe ——Perhaps, this remarkable Expreſſion may be intended to intimate, not only the *extreme*

by a Meaſure. But, how much more marvellous is that magnificent Oeconomy, which *poiſed* the *Stars* with inexpreſſible Nicety, and *meted* out the *Heavens* with a Span! Where all is prodigiouſly vaſt; immenſely various; and yet more than mathematically exact. Surely, the *Wiſdom* of GOD manifeſts itſelf in the Skies, and ſhines in thoſe lucid Orbs: Shines on the contemplative Mind, with a Luſtre incomparably brighter, than that which their united Splendors tranſmit to the Eye.—Behold that countleſs Multitude of Globes; conſider their amazing Bulk; regard them as the Sovereigns of ſo many Syſtems, each accom-

extreme Niceneſs, which ſtated the Dimenſions of the round World, *in general*, or in the groſs; but alſo that *particular Exactneſs*, with which the very ſmalleſt Materials, that conſtitute it's Frame (not excepting each individual Atom) were calculated and diſpoſed: —*q. d.* 'Tis a ſmall Thing to ſay, No ſuch enormous Redundancies, as unneceſſary Ridges of Mountains, were ſuffered to ſubſiſt. There was not ſo much as the leaſt Grain of Sand *ſuperfluous*, or a ſingle Particle of Duſt *deficient*. — As the grand Aim of the Deſcription is, to celebrate the *conſummate Wiſdom* exemplified in the Creation; and to diſplay that *perfect Proportion*, with which every Part tallies, coincides, and harmonizes, with the Whole; I have taken Leave to alter the Word of our *Engliſh* Tranſlation *comprehend*, and introduce in it's ſtead a Term, equally faithful to the *Hebrew*, and more ſignificative of the Prophet's preciſe Idea. *Iſa.* xl. 12.

accompanied with his planetary Equipage. Upon this Suppoſition, what a Multiplicity of mighty Spheres, muſt be perpetually running their Rounds, in the upper Regions! Yet, none miſtake their Way, or *wander* from the Goal; though they paſs through *trackleſs* and unbounded Fields. None *fly off* from their *Orbits*, into extravagant Excurſions; none *preſs in* upon their *Centre*, with too near an Approach. None *interfere* with each other in their perennial Paſſage; or *intercept* the kindly Communications of another's Influence *. But all their Rotations proceed in eternal Harmony; keeping ſuch Time, and obſerving ſuch Laws, as are moſt exquiſitely adapted to the Perfection of the Whole.

WHILE I contemplate this "excellent Wiſ-"dom which made the Heavens," and attunes all their Motions; how am I abaſhed at that Mixture of *Arrogance* and *Folly*, which has, at any time, inclined me to *murmur* at thy *Diſpenſations*, O LORD! What is this, but a ſort of implicit Treaſon againſt thy Supremacy; and a tacit Denial of thy infinite Underſtanding?——

Haſt

* The Interception of Light, by means of an *Eclipſe*, happens very *rarely:* And then, is of ſo *ſhort* a *Continuance*, as not to be at all inconvenient: Is attended with ſuch *Circumſtances*, as render it rather uſeful, than prejudicial.

Haſt Thou ſo regularly placed ſuch a wonderful Diverſity of Syſtems, through the boundleſs Univerſe?—Didſt Thou, without any probationary Eſſays, without any improving Retouches, ſpeak them into the moſt conſummate Perfection?—Doſt Thou continually ſuperintend all their Circumſtances, with a Sagacity, that never miſtakes, the minuteſt *Tittle* of *Propriety?* And ſhall I be ſo unaccountably ſtupid, as to queſtion the *Juſtneſs* of thy *Diſcernment*, in "chooſing "my Inheritance, and fixing the Bounds of my "Habitation?"—Not a *ſingle Erratum*, in modelling the Structure; determining the Diſtance*; and conducting the Career of *unnumbered Worlds!* And ſhall my peeviſh Humour preſume to *cenſure* thy *Interpoſition*, with regard to the Affairs of *one* inconſiderable *Creature*; whoſe Stature, in ſuch

* The Sun in particular (and let this ſerve as a Specimen of that moſt geometrical Exactneſs, with which the other celeſtial Bodies are conſtituted, and all their Circumſtances regulated) the Sun is formed of ſuch a determinate Magnitude, and placed at ſuch a convenient Diſtance,—"as not to annoy, but only "refreſh us, and nouriſh the Ground with it's "kindly Warmth. If it was *larger*, it would ſet "the Earth on Fire; if *ſmaller*, it would leave it "frozen. If it was *nearer* us, we ſhould be ſcorched "to Death; if *farther* from us, we ſhould not be "able to live for Want of Heat." *Stackhouſe*'s *Hiſtory of the Bible.*

ſuch a comparative View, is leſs than Span; and his preſent Duration, little more than a Moment?

O! THOU GOD, "in whoſe Hand my "Breath is, and whoſe are all my Ways," let ſuch Sentiments as now poſſeſs my Thoughts, be always lively on my Heart! Theſe ſhall compoſe my Mind into a *chearful* Acquieſcence, and *thankful* Submiſſion; even when Afflictions *gall* the Senſe, or Diſappointments *break* my Schemes. Then ſhall I, like the grateful Patriarch *, in all the Changes of my Condition, and even in the Depths of Diſtreſs, erect an *Altar* of adoring Reſignation; and inſcribe it with the Apoſtle's *Motto*, To GOD ONLY WISE. Then, ſhouldſt Thou give me Leave to be the Carver of my own Fortunes, I would humbly deſire to relinquiſh the Grant, and recommit the Diſpoſal of myſelf to thy unerring Beneficence. Fully perſuaded, that *thy Councils*; though contrary to my froward Inclinations, or even afflictive to my Fleſh; are incomparably more eligible, than the *blind Impulſe* of my own Will, however ſoothing to animal Nature.

ON a careleſs Inſpection, you perceive no Accuracy or Uniformity in the Poſition of the heavenly

* See *Gen.* xii. 7, 8.

heavenly Bodies. They appear like an *illuſtrious Chaos*; a promiſcuous Heap of ſhining Globes; neither ranked in Order, nor moving by Line. —But, what *ſeems* Confuſion, *is* all Regularity. What carries a Shew of Negligence, is really the Reſult of the moſt maſterly Contrivance. You think, perhaps, they rove in their aereal Flight; but they rove by the niceſt Rule, and without the leaſt Error. Their Circuits, though ſeemingly *devious*; their Mazes, though *intricate* to our Apprehenſions *; are marked out, not indeed with *golden Compaſſes*, but by the infinitely more *exact Determinations* of the all-wiſe Spirit.

So, what wears the *Appearance* of *Calamity*, in the Allotments appointed for the Godly, has really the *Nature* of a *Bleſſing*. It iſſues from fatherly Love, and will terminate in the richeſt Good. If *Joſeph* is ſnatched from the Embraces of an indulgent Parent, and abandoned to Slavery in a foreign Land; it is in order to ſave the holy Family, from periſhing by Famine; and to preſerve "the Seed, in whom all the Nations "of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed." If he falls into the deepeſt Diſgrace, it is on purpoſe that he

* ——— Mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd; yet regular
Then moſt, when moſt irregular they ſeem.
MILT.

he may riſe to the higheſt Honours. Even the *Confinement* of the *Priſon*, by the unſearchable Workings of Providence, *opens* his Way to the Right-hand of the *Throne* itſelf.——Let the moſt afflicted Servant of JESUS, wait the final Upſhot of Things: and he will *then* diſcover the apparent Expediency, of all thoſe Tribulations; which *now*, perhaps, he can hardly admit, without Reluctance; or ſuffer, without ſome Struggles of Diſſatisfaction. Then, the guſhing Tear, and the heaving Sigh, will be turned into Tides of Gratitude, and Hymns of holy Wonder.

IN the mean time, let no audacious Railer, tax the Divine Procedure; but, *adoring* where we cannot *comprehend*, let us expect the *Evolution* of the myſterious Plan. Then, ſhall every Eye perceive; that the ſeeming *Labyrinths* of Providence, were the moſt *direct* and *compendious* Way; to effect his general Purpoſes of Grace, and to bring about each One's particular Happineſs * ——Then, alſo, ſhall it be clearly ſhewn, in the Preſence of applauding Worlds; Why, Virtue pined in Want, while Vice rioted in

* ——————— The *moral World*
Which though to Us it ſeems embroil'd, moves on
In higher Order; fitted, and impell'd
By *Wiſdom*'s fineſt Hand, and iſſuing all
In gen'ral Good.
THOMS. *Winter*, *l.* 586. laſt Edit.

Affluence: Why, amiable Innocence ſo often *dragged* the Dungeon *Chain*, while horrid Guilt *trailed* the *Robe* of State.——That Day of univerſal Audit, that Day of everlaſting Retribution, will not only *vindicate*, but *magnify*, the whole Management of Heaven. The auguſt Seſſions ſhall cloſe with this unanimous, this glorious Acknowledgment: "Though *Clouds and* "*Darkneſs*, impenetrable by any human Scru- "tiny, *were* ſometimes *round about* the ſupreme "Conductor of Things; yet *Righteouſneſs and* "*Judgment were the* conſtant *Habitation of his* "*Seat* *; the invariable Standard of all his Ad- "miniſtrations." —While we view (If I may illuſtrate the grandeſt Truths, by inferior Occurrences, while we view the *Arras*, on the Side of *leaſt Diſtinction*, it is void of any elegant Fancy: without any nice Strokes of Art; nothing but a confuſed Jumble of incoherent Threads. No ſooner is the Piece beheld in its *proper Aſpect*, but the ſuſpected Rudeneſs vaniſhes, and the moſt curious Arrangement takes place; we are charmed with Deſigns of the fineſt Taſte, and Figures of the moſt graceful Forms; all is ſhaped with Symmetry; all is clad in Beauty.

THE *Goodneſs* of GOD, is moſt eminently diſplayed in the Skies.—Could we take an underſtanding

* Pſal. xcvii. 2.

derſtanding Survey, of whatever is formed by the Divine Architect, throughout the whole Extent of *material* Things; our Minds would be charmed with their matchleſs Excellencies, and our Tongues echo back that great Encomium, they are "very, very good." Moſt *beautiful* * in themſelves; contrived by unerring Wiſdom, and executed with inimitable Skill: Moſt *uſeful* * in their Functions; exactly fitting the Places they fill, and completely anſwering the Purpoſes, for which they were intended.—All the Parts of the inanimate Creation proclaim, both by their *intrinſic* and *relative* Excellencies, the all-diffuſive Beneficence of their Maker.

** This καλοκαγαθια of the Univerſe, and all its Parts, has been very highly, and very juſtly extolled, by the antient Inquirers into Nature. And was, indeed, an illuſtrious Scene, ſpread before the Sages of the Heathen World; wherein to contemplate the Goodneſs, and the Glories, of the ſupreme Being.—It was nobly ſaid, by a Pagan Philoſopher, on this Occaſion, Εις ερωτα μεταβληθηναι τον Θεον μελλοντα δημιουργειν. *That* GOD, *when he undertook the Work of Creation, transformed Himſelf into Love.*——But he need not *transform* Himſelf into this amiable Principle; for "GOD *is* Love:" As was much more loftily ſaid by One, whom that *Philoſopher* would have termed a *Barbarian*, 1 *John* iv. 8.

How much more wonderful are the Diſplays of Divine Indulgence, in the Worlds of *Life!* Becauſe, dead Matter is incapable of Delight; therefore, the gracious Creator has raiſed innumerable Ranks, of *perceptive Exiſtence:* Such as are qualified to taſte his Bounty, and *enjoy* each a *Happineſs* ſuited to it's peculiar State. With this View, He furniſhed the Regions of Nature, with a moſt numerous Series of ſenſitive Beings. The *Waters*, teem with Shoals of finny Inhabitants. The *dry Land*, ſwarms with Animals of every Order. The Dwellings of the *Firmament*, are occupied by Multitudes of winged People. Not ſo much as a *green Leaf*, Philoſophers ſay, but lodges, and accommodates, its puny animalcule Tenants *.—And wherefore this Diverſity, this Profuſion

* A very *celebrated Poet*, in a beautiful Paragraph on this Subject, informs his Readers, That all Nature ſwarms with Life. In ſubterranean *Cells*, the Earth heaves with vital Motion. Even the hard *Stone*, in the very inmoſt Receſſes of it's impenetrable Citadel, holds Multitudes of animated Inhabitants. The *Pulp* of mellow *Fruit*, and all the Productions of the Orchard, feed the inviſible Nations. Each *Liquid*, whether of acid Taſte, or milder Reliſh, abounds with various Forms of ſenſitive Exiſtence. Nor is the pure *Stream*, or tranſparent *Air*, without their Colonies of unſeen People.—In which Conſtitution of Things, we have a wonderful Inſtance, not only of the Divine Goodneſs to thoſe minute Beings, in *giving* them a *Capacity*

Profuſion of living Creatures; flying the Air, treading the Ground, and gliding through the Paths of the Sea? For this noble Reaſon,—That the great Sovereign may exerciſe his ſuperabundant Goodneſs; that his *Table* may be furniſhed, with Millions and Millions of *Gueſts*; that He may fill, every Hour, every Moment, their Mouths with *Food*, or their Hearts with *Gladneſs*.

BUT, what a ſmall Theatre are Three or *Four Elements*, for the Operations of JEHOVAH'S Bounty? His magnificent Liberality, ſcorns ſuch ſcanty Limits. If you aſk, Wherefore has He created *all Worlds*, and repleniſhed them with an unknown *Multiplicity* of *Beings*; riſing, one above another, in an endleſs Gradation of ſtill richer Endowments, and ſtill nobler Capacities? The Anſwer is,—For the Manifeſtation of his

 own

city for animal Gratifications; but of his tender Care for Mankind, in *making* them *imperceptible* to our Senſes.

——— Theſe, conceal'd
By the kind Art of forming Heav'n, eſcape
The groſſer Eye of Man: For, if the Worlds
In Worlds inclos'd ſhould on his Senſes burſt,
From Cates ambroſial, and the nectar'd Bowl,
He'd turn abhorrent; and, in dead of Night,
When Silence ſleeps o'er all, be ſtunn'd with Noiſe.
THOMSON's *Summer*.

own Glory, and eſpecially for the *Communication* of his inexhauſtible *Beneficence* *.——The great Creator could propoſe no Advantage to Himſelf, His Bliſs is incapable of any Addition. "Be- "fore the Mountains were brought forth, or "ever the Earth and the World were made," He was ſupremely happy, in his own independent and all-ſufficient Self. His grand Deſign therefore, in erecting ſo many Stately Fabrics; and peopling them with ſo many Tribes of Inhabitants; was, To *transfuſe* his exuberant *Kindneſs*, and *impart Felicity* in all its Forms. Ten thouſand Worlds, ſtocked with Ten thouſand times Ten thouſand Ranks, of ſenſitive and intelligent Exiſtence, are ſo many *ſpacious Gardens*; which, with *Rivers* of communicated *Joy*, this ever-flowing Fountain waters continually.

BOUND-

* A *ſacred Writer*, conſidering this pleaſing Subject; and confining his Obſervation, within the *narrow Limits* of his own Country; cries out, with a Mixture of Amazement and Gratitude, *How great is his Goodneſs, and how great is his Beauty!*—Who then can forbear being loſt in Wonder, and tranſported with Delight; when he extends his Survey, to thoſe infinitely more *copious Communications* of Divine Bounty; which, like ſalutary and refreſhing Streams, run through all Worlds; and make, not only the *little Valleys* of a ſingle Kingdom, but the *Immenſity of Creation, laugh and ſing?* Zech. ix. 17.

BOUNDLESS *, and (which raiſes our Idea of this divine Principle, to the very higheſt Degree of Perfection) diſintereſted * Munificence! How *inexpreſſibly amiable* is the bleſſed GOD, conſidered in this charming Light! Is it poſſible to conceive any Excellence, ſo adorable and lovely; as infinite Benevolence, guided by unerring Wiſdom, and exerting Almighty Power, on purpoſe to make a whole Univerſe happy?—O my Soul, what an *irreſiſtible Attractive* is here! What a moſt worthy Object, for thy moſt fervent Affection! Shall now every glittering Toy, become a Rival to this tranſcendently beneficent Being, and rob Him of thy Heart? O! no. Let his creating Arm teach thee to *truſt* in the Fulneſs of his Sufficiency:——Let his all-ſuperintending Eye incline thee, to *ſubmit* to his Decrees:——And let his Bounty; ſo freely vouchſafed; ſo amply diffuſed; win thee to *love* Him, with all the warmeſt Affections of a grateful and admiring Soul: win thee to *ſerve* Him, not with joyleſs Awe, or ſlaviſh Dread, but with unfeigned Alacrity, and a delightful Complacency.

** In this Senſe, *There is none good, but One, that is GOD.* None *univerſally* and *eſſentially* good: None, whoſe Goodneſs extends itſelf, in an infinite *Variety* of Bleſſings, to *every* capable Object; or, who always diſpenſes his Favours, from the *ſole* Principle of *free* and diſintereſted Benevolence.

BUT, if the Goodneſs of GOD is ſo admirably ſeen, in the Works of Nature, and the Favours of Providence; with what a noble Superiority, does it *even triumph*, in the *Myſtery* of *Redemption* * ? Redemption, is the brighteſt Mirror, in which to contemplate this moſt lovely Attribute of the Deity. Other Gifts, are only as *Mites* from the Divine Treaſury; but Redemption opens, I had almoſt ſaid exhauſts, *all* the *Stores* of his glorious Grace. Herein, "GOD *com-* "*mendeth* his Love †:" not only manifeſts, but renders

* In this, and in other Parts of the *Contemplations*, the Reader will obſerve, That the Attributes of the DEITY are repreſented, as ſhining, with more diſtinguiſhed Luſtre, in the Wonders of *Redemption*, than in the Works of *Creation*. If *ſuch* Remarks ſhould ſeem to be unprecedented, or to ſtand in Need of a Vindication; permit me to ſubjoin the Sentiments of a great Critic, equally verſed in *both* thoſe ſublime Theories. —— "*Tully*, ſays He, re- "quires, in his perfect Orator, ſome Skill in the "Nature of heavenly Bodies; becauſe, his Mind "will become more extenſive and unconfined; and, "when He deſcends to treat of human Affairs, He "will both think and write in a more exalted and "magnificent Manner. For the ſame Reaſon, that "excellent Maſter would have recommended the "Study of thoſe great and glorious Myſteries, which "Revelation has diſcovered to Us; *to which the* "*nobleſt Parts of this Syſtem of the World are as* "*much inferior, as the Creature is leſs excellent than* "*the Creator.*" *Spect.* Vol. VIII. N° 633.

† Rom. v. 8.

renders it perfectly marvellous: manifeſts it in ſo ſtupendous a Manner, that it is beyond Parallel; beyond Thought; and "above all Bleſſing and "Praiſe." — Was HE not thy *Son*, everlaſting GOD, thy *only* Son; the Son of thy Boſom from eternal Ages; the higheſt *Object* of thy complacential *Delight?* Was not thy Love to this adorable Son, incomparably greater than the *tendereſt* Affection of *Any*, or the *united* Affections of *All*, mortal Parents? Was not the bleſſed JESUS more illuſtrious in Excellency, than all Angels; more exalted in Dignity, than all Heavens? And yet, didſt thou reſign HIM, for poor Mortals; for vile Sinners? Couldſt thou ſee Him deſcend, from his *Royal Throne*; and take up his Abode, in the *ſordid Stable?* See him forego the *Homage* of the *Seraphim*; and ſtand expoſed to the reproachful *Indignities*, of an inſolent *Rabble?* See Him arraigned at the Bar, and ſentenced to Death; numbered with Malefactors, and nailed to the Gibbet; bathed in his own innocent Blood, and pouring out his Soul in Agonies of Sorrow? — Could the Father, the Father *himſelf*, with unknown Philanthropy, ſay; "It muſt, it ſhall, "be ſo. My Pity to rebellious Man pleads, and "prevails. Awake, therefore, O *Sword* *, "edged with divine Wrath. Awake; and be "ſheathed in that *immaculate Breaſt*; pierce "that

* Zech. xiii. 7.

" that *dearly-beloved Heart.* I am content, that " my Son endure the Sharpneſs of Death, rather " than *ſinful Mortals* periſh for ever."—Incomprehenſible Love! May it, henceforward, be the favourite Subject of my *Meditation*; more delightful to my muſing Mind, than Applauſe to the ambitious Ear! May it be the darling Theme of my *Diſcourſe*; ſweeter to my Tongue, than the Droppings of the Honeycomb to my Taſte! May it be my choiceſt *Comfort*, through all the Changes of *Life*; and my reviving *Cordial*, even in the laſt Extremities of *Diſſolution* itſelf!

A *PROPHET*, contemplating, with a diſtant Survey, this unexampled Inſtance of Almighty Love, is wrapt into a *Tranſport* of *Delight.* At a Loſs for proper Acknowledgments, he calls upon the whole Univerſe to aid his labouring Breaſt, and ſupply his Lack of Praiſe. *Sing melodiouſly, ye* vaulted *Heavens*; *exult, and even leap for Gladneſs, thou* cumberous *Earth*; *ye Mountains*, break your long Silence, and *burſt into Peals of loud Acclamation* *; *for the* LORD, by

* *Iſa.* xlix. 13.—I have not adhered to our common Tranſlation, but endeavoured to preſerve, ſomewhat more faithfully, the noble *Pathos*, and inimitable *Energy*, of the ſacred Original.——The Love of GOD manifeſted in a Divine and dying Saviour, is a Bleſſing of ſuch *inconceivable Richneſs*; as muſt render all Acknowledgments *flat*, and all Encomiums *languid.*

by this precious Gift, and this great Salvation, *hath comforted his People.*——A *ſacred Hiſtorian* hath left it upon Record; that, at the firſt Exhibition of this raviſhing Scene, there was with the Angel, who brought the bleſſed Tidings, a Multitude of the heavenly Hoſt; praiſing GOD, and making the Concave of the Skies reſound with their Hallelujahs. At the Dawn of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, when He was beginning to riſe with Healing in his Wings, the *Morning Stars* ſang together, and all the *Sons* of *GOD* ſhouted for Joy.——And ſhall *Man*, whom this gracious Diſpenſation principally reſpects; ſhall *Man*, who is the Centre of all theſe gladdening Rays; ſhall He have no *Heart* to *adore*, no *Anthem* to *celebrate*, This

Love without End, and without Meaſure Grace?
MILT.

How *clear* is the Face of the Sky, and how perfectly *pure!* Clearer than the limpid Stream, more

languid. Yet, I think, the moſt poetical and moſt *emphatical Celebration* of that unſpeakable Inſtance of Goodneſs, is contained in this rapturous Exclamation of the Prophet. Which intimates, with a wonderful Majeſty of Sentiment, that even the whole Compaſs of the *inanimate Creation*; could it be *ſenſible* of the Benefit, and capable of *Delight*; would expreſs it's *Gratitude*, in all theſe Demonſtrations of the moſt lively and exuberant Joy.

more pure than the poliſhed Cryſtal. That *ſtately Cieling*; fretted with Gold, and ſtretched to an Extent of many Millions of Leagues; is not diſfigured with a *ſingle Flaw*. That *azure Mantle*; embroidered with Stars, and ſpacious enough to form a Covering for unnumbered Words; is without the leaſt *Spot* or *Wrinkle*.—Yet, this can ſcarce yield us, ſo much as a faint Repreſentation of the *Divine Purity*. GOD, is a GOD of the moſt immaculate Excellence. His Ways are Uprightneſs itſelf; his Counſels and Words, the very Sanctity of Wiſdom and of Truth. The *Laws*, which He has given to *univerſal Nature*; are exquiſitely contrived, and beyond all Poſſibility of Improvement. The *Precepts*, which He has appointed for the *human Race*; are a complete Summary, of all that is honourable in itſelf, and perfective of the rational Mind.—— Not the leaſt *Overſight*, in planning a Series of Events for all Futurity; nor the leaſt *Mal-adminiſtration*, in managing the Affairs of every Age, ſince Time began; of every Nation, under the whole Heaven.——Pardon theſe diſparaging Expreſſions. A *negative Perfection* is far, far beneath thy Dignity, *O Thou moſt Higheſt* *. In all

* *O Thou moſt Higheſt.* — This Expreſſion occurs more than once, in the Pſalms uſed by the Eſtabliſhed Church. And is, I think, one of thoſe *Beauties*; which,

all theſe Inſtances; in all thy Acts, and all thy Attributes; Thou art not only holy, but "*glo-*
"*rious* in *Holineſs*."

So inconceivably holy is the LORD GOD of Hoſts, that He ſees *Defilement* even in the *Brightneſs*

which, becauſe often exhibited, generally eſcape our Notice. It is a *Superlative* formed on a Superlative; and, though not ſtrictly conformable to *grammatical Rules*, is nobly ſuperior to them all.—The *Language* ſeems to be ſenſible of its own *Deficiency*; when the incomprehenſible JEHOVAH is addreſſed, or celebrated. Oppreſſed, as it were, with the Glories of the Subject, it labours after a *more emphatical* manner of Diction, than the *ordinary Forms* of Speech afford.——It is, if I rightly judge, one of thoſe daring and happy Peculiarities of a maſterly Genius, which Mr. *Pope* ſo finely deſcribes; and, while he deſcribes, exemplifies:

Great Wits ſometimes may *glorioufly offend*,
And *riſe* to *Faults* true Critics dare not mend;
From vulgar Bounds with brave Diſorder part,
And ſnatch a Grace beyond the Reach of Art.
Eſſay on Criticiſm.

St. *Paul*'s—ελαχιστοτερῳ παντων των αγιων—is a beautiful Paſſage of the like Nature; which our Tranſlators have very properly rendered, *Leſs than the leaſt of all Saints.*——His—πολλῳ μαλλον κρεισσον——is another Inſtance of the ſame Kind. But here, the *Engliſh* Verſion fails. *Far better*—is extremely *flaccid*, compared with the *nervous* Original. And I greatly queſtion, whether it is poſſible to tranſlate the Sentence with equal Conciſeneſs, and equal Spirit. See *Eph.* iii. 8. *Phil.* i. 23.

neſs of yonder Firmament. Thoſe living Sapphires, before his Majeſty, loſe their Luſtre. *He looketh even to the Moon, and it ſhineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight. How much leſs Man, who,* in his fallen and depraved State, *is* little better than *a Worm,* that crawls in the corrupted Carcaſe; *and the Son of Man, who,* by reaſon of his manifold actual Impurities, *is* too juſtly compared to *an Inſect,* that wallows amidſt Stench and Putrefaction *? — Is there not then abundant Cauſe, for the moſt irre-

* *Job* xxv. 5, 6. I ſubmit it to the Judgment of the Learned, Whether this is not the true Meaning of the Text.—It may not be able, perhaps, to recommend itſelf, to the *ſqueamiſhly nice* Critic; or to thoſe, who are always extolling, the *ſuppoſed Dignity* of the human Nature. But it ſeems, in Preference to every other Interpretation, *ſuitable* to the ſacred *Context*; and is far, from being *injurious* to the *Character* of that apoſtate Race, which is "altogether become abominable," and "is as an unclean Thing." — On this Suppoſition, there is not only an *apparent*, but a very *ſtriking* Contraſt, between the Purity of GOD, and the Pollution of Man: The *Purity* of GOD, which outſhines the Moon, and eclipſes the Stars; the *Pollution* of Man, which renders him as loathſome to the all-ſeeing Eye, as the vileſt Vermin are in ours. — Without aſſigning this Senſe to the Paſſage, I cannot diſcern the Force of the *Antitheſis*, or indeed the *Propriety* of the Sentiment. Worms, in the general, give us an Idea of *Meanneſs* and *Infirmity*; not of *Defilement* and *Impurity*; unleſs they are Inſects of ſuch a particular Kind,

irreproachable and eminent of Mankind, to renounce all *arrgant Pretenſions*; to lay aſide every aſſuming Air; to take nothing but *Shame* and Confuſion to *themſelves?* A holy Sufferer, and a holy Prophet, felt ſuch humbling Impreſſions, from a Glimpſe of the uncreated Purity. *I abhor myſelf in Duſt and Aſhes* *, was the Declaration of the one; *I am a Man of unclean Lips* †, the Confeſſion of the other.—— And ſhould not this teach us all, to adore the Divine Mercies, for that precious *purifying Fountain* ‡; which was foretold from the Foundations of the World, but was opened at that awful Juncture, when knotty *Whips* tore the Fleſh; when ragged *Thorns* mangled the Temples; when ſharpened *Nails* cut freſh Sluices for the crimſon Current; when the Gaſh of the *Spear* completed the dreadful Work, and *forthwith flowed three*, from the wounded Heart, *Blood and Water?*

ESPE-

Kind, and conſidered in ſuch noiſome Circumſtances. —The Two Words of the Original — רמה and תולעה — are evidently uſed in this Signification by *Moſes* and *Iſaiah*; by the one, to denote the Vermin, that devoured the *putrefied Manna*; by the other, te expreſs the Reptiles, which ſwarm in the *Body* that ſees *Corruption*. *Exod.* xvi. 20. *Iſa.* xiv. 11.

* *Job* xlii. 6. † *Iſa.* vi. 5.

‡ In that Day there ſhall be a Fountain opened to the Houſe of *David*, and to the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, for Sin and Uncleanneſs. *Zech.* xiii. 1.

ESPECIALLY ſince the GOD, in whoſe Sight the *very Heavens* are *not unſullied*; though ſo curiouſly fine, and "ſpread out like a molten "Looking-glaſs;"—ſince this GOD ſaw *no Blemiſh* in his *dear Son*. His all-penetrating and jealous Eye, diſcerned nothing amiſs, nothing defective, in our glorious Redeemer. Nothing amiſs? Yea, He bore this moſt illuſtrious Teſtimony, concerning his holy Child JESUS: "In Him "I am *pleaſed*; I am *well pleaſed*; I acquieſce, "with intire Complacency, and the *higheſt* "*Delight*, in his Perſon; his Undertaking; "and the whole Execution of his Office." —How ſhould this Thought, *enliven* our *Hopes*; while the other, *mortifies* our *Pride?* Ought not our Hearts, to ſpring within us, and even leap for Joy; from the repeated Aſſurances given us by Revelation, That ſuch a divinely excellent Being is our Mediator? What apparent Reaſon has every Believer, to adopt the bleſſed Virgin's Exclamation? "*My Soul doth magnify the* "*LORD* for this tranſcendent Mercy; *and* "*my Spirit rejoices*, not in wide-extended Har- "veſts, waving over my fertile Glebe *; not in "Armies vanquiſhed, and leaving the peculiar "Treaſure of Nations for my Spoil *; but in "an

** The inſpired Penman, from theſe Two *Occaſions* of diſtinguiſhed *Joy*, ſets forth the incomparably *greater Delight*, which ariſes from the Gift of a Saviour, and the Bleſſing of Redemption. *Iſa.* ix. *ver.* 3. compared with *ver.* 6.

" an infinitely richer, nobler Bleſſing, even *in* " *GOD my Saviour.*"——That a Perſon ſo ſublime and perfect, has vouchſafed to become my *Surety:* to give Himſelf for my *Ranſom*, in the World below; and act as my *Advocate*, in the Royal Preſence above: yea, to make *my* Recovery, the Reward of *his* Sufferings; *my* final Felicity, the Honour of *his* mediatorial Kingdom!

WHEN an innumerable Multitude * of Bodies, many of them more than a *Hundred thouſand Miles* in Diameter †, are all ſet *in Motion*: ——When the *Orbits*, in which they perform their periodical Revolutions, are extended at the Rate of ſeveral Hundreds of *Millions*:——when each has a *diſtinct* and ſeparate *Sphere*, for finiſhing his vaſt Circuit: — when none knows, what it is to be *cramped*; but moſt *freely expatiates*, in his unbounded Career: —— when every one is placed, at ſuch an *immenſe Remove* from each other;

* This refers, not only to the Planets which paſs and repaſs about our Sun, but alſo to the other Planetary Worlds, which are ſuppoſed to attend the ſeveral fixed Stars.

† The Diameter of *Jupiter* is calculated at 130,653 Miles, while his Orbit is reckoned to conſiſt of 895,134,000. Which Computation, according to the Maxims of Aſtronomy, and the Laws of Proportion, may, as is taken for granted in the Contemplations, be applied to *other Planets* revolving round *other Suns*.

other; that they appear to their reſpective Inhabitants, only as ſo many *Spots* of *Light*: — O! how aſtoniſhing muſt be the *Expanſe*, which yields *Room* for all theſe mighty Globes, and their widely-diffuſed Operations! To what prodigious Lengths did the Almighty Builder ſtretch his Line, when He marked out the ſtupendous Platform! — I wonder at ſuch an immeaſurable Extent. My very Thoughts are loſt, in this *Abyſs* of Space. But, be it known to Mortals; be it never forgot by Sinners; that, in all it's moſt *ſurpriſing Amplitude*, it is *ſmall*, it is *ſcanty*, compared with the Bounty and the Mercy of it's Maker.

HIS *Bounty* is abſolutely without Limits *, and without End. The moſt laviſh Generoſity cannot *exhauſt*, or even *diminiſh*, his Munificence. O! all ye Tribes of Men; or rather, all ye Claſſes of intelligent Creatures; ye are not ſtraitened

* By *Bounty*, I mean, not the actual *Exerciſe*, or the *Effects* of this Excellency in the Deity. Theſe *are*, and always *muſt be*, through the immenſe Perfection of the Attribute, and the neceſſary Scantineſs of the Recipient, bounded. But, I would be underſtood, as ſpeaking of the Divine *Power*, and the Divine *Will*, to exert Divine Beneficence. Theſe can have no real, no imaginable Limits. Theſe, after a Communication of Bleſſings, diſtributed to unnumbered Worlds, continued through unnumbered Ages, muſt *ſtill* have more to beſtow; for *ever* have more to beſtow; *infinitely* more to beſtow, than it is poſſible for Creation itſelf to receive.

ſtraitened in the *Liberality* of your ever-bleſſed Creator, be not ſtraitened in your own *Expectations*. "Open your Mouth wide, and He ſhall "fill it" with copious and continual Draughts from the Cup of Joy. Your GOD, on whom is your whole Dependence, is more than able; is more than willing; to "ſupply all your Need, "according to his Riches in Glory."—When the LORD JEHOVAH is the Giver, and his Grace * the Gift; let your Wiſhes be unbounded, and your Cravings inſatiable. *All* that created Beings can poſſibly *covet*, is but a very ſmall *Pittance* of that unknown Happineſs, which the everlaſting Benefactor is ready to *beſtow*. Form not your Eſtimate of the *ſupreme Beneficence*, from thoſe narrow Models of *mortal Kindneſs*; which either your own Experience has obſerved, or the Hiſtory of Ages has recorded. Suppoſe every charitable Diſpoſition, which warms the Hearts of the human Race, added to thoſe more inlarged Affections, which glow in heavenly Boſoms; what were they all, even in their higheſt Exer-

 ciſe,

* 2 *Cor.* ix. 8. *GOD is able to make* all *Grace* abound *towards you, that ye, having* all Sufficiency *in* all Things, *may* abound *to* every *good Work*.—How beautiful, and emphatical, is this Deſcription! inferior to nothing, but that Extent of Ability, and thoſe Riches of Liberality, which it ſo eloquently celebrates. Does it not *exhauſt* all the *Powers* of Language; while it attempts to give us a *Specimen*, of the *Munificence* of the LORD?

ciſe, compared with the Benignity of the Divine Nature? — Bleſs *me* then, Thou eternal Source of Love; bleſs *all* that reverence thy holy Name; according to thy own moſt profuſe Goodneſs: whoſe great Prerogative it is, to diſdain all Meaſure. O! bleſs us, in Proportion to that Grace; the Richneſs of which (unutterable by the Tongues of Men and of Angels) was once *ſpoke* in the *Groans*, and *written* in the *Wounds*, of thy expiring Son!

AND as for the *Mercy* of GOD, it is "greater "than the Heavens;" more extenſive than the Dimenſions of the Sky. Charming Thought! tranſporting Reflection! let me indulge Thee once more *. Let me think over the noble Diſplays of this lovely Attribute; and, while I admire the *Trophies* of *forgiving Goodneſs*, add one

* This refers to Page 118. of *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*.—The following Pages, to the 187th, exhibit a *digreſſive* View of the Divine *Mercy*. I thought it proper to apprize my Reader of this Excurſion; though, I hope, it will be needleſs to offer an Apology for dwelling ſo long upon this delightful Theme. Who can complain of *Tediouſneſs*, while I ſpeak *Conſolation* to diſtreſſed, and *Recovery* to ruined Creatures? The Divine Mercy is the ſole Fountain of all our preſent and future Bleſſings. In proportion to this benign Attribute, human Hopes ariſe, and human Felicity flows. Who, therefore, can be weary of *viewing* and *reviewing*; when the *Lengths* and *Breadths* of forgiving Grace, are the raviſhing Proſpect?

one to the Number.——With what amiable and affecting Colours, is this repreſented in the *Parable* of the *Prodigal!* What could induce that fooliſh Youth, to forſake his gracious Father? Had he not been tenderly cheriſhed, by the good Parent; and loaded with Benefits, from his indulgent Hand? Were not the *Reſtraints* of parental Government, an *eaſy Yoke*? or rather, a *Preſervative* from *Ruin?* Notwithſtanding every endearing Obligation, he revolts from his Duty; and launches out into ſuch ſcandalous Irregularities, as were a Diſhonour to his Family, and deſtructive to himſelf.——But, when Afflictions brought him to a Senſe of his Folly, and ſharp Neceſſity drove him to a ſubmiſſive Return; did the *injured Father* diſcover the leaſt *Reſentment* of Mind? Quite the Reverſe. He *eſpied him*, while he was yet a *great Way off*; and, the Moment he beheld the profligate Creature, "his "Bowels ſounded like an Harp," touch'd with Notes divinely ſoft. He never once thinks of the riotous Living, and infamous Courſe of Debaucheries. Pity, parental Pity, paſſes an Act of Oblivion; and, in one Inſtant, cancels a Series of long-continued Provocations.—So ſtrong are the Yearnings of fatherly Affection; that he even *runs*, to receive the naked and deſtitute Wretch, to his Arms. And is there a ſingle Frown in his Brow, or one upbraiding Word on

his Tongue?—Inſtead of *reproaching* him for his odious Exceſſes; he *falls* on his *Neck*, and ſnatches him to his eager Embraces. Inſtead of rejecting him with Indignation, for his undutiful Extravagance; he kiſſes him with Tears of Delight: and rejoices, at his Return from Folly; as he formerly rejoiced, on the Day of his Nativity. —When this Companion of Harlots opens his Mouth, *before he ſpeaks, the Father hears.* He interrupts him, in the midſt of his intended Speech. The Overflowings of his compaſſionate Heart can brook no Delay. He ſeems to be *uneaſy himſelf*, till he has made the afflicted *Penitent glad*, with the Aſſurance of his Acceptance, and the choiceſt of his Favours. While the poor abaſhed Offender ſeeks nothing more, than not to be abhorred; he is thoroughly reconciled. While he requeſts no other Indulgence, than only to be treated as the *meaneſt Servant*; he is careſſed, and honoured, as the *deareſt* of *Children*.—Was there ever ſo bright and winning a Picture, of the tendereſt Mercy; moſt freely vouchſafed, to the moſt unworthy of Creatures? Yet *thus*, my Soul; and *thus*, my Fellow-ſinner; will the LORD GOD of everlaſting Compaſſions receive us; if, with a contrite Spirit, and lively Faith, we turn to him through JESUS CHRIST.

WHERE Sin has abounded, ſays the Proclamation from the Court of Heaven, *Grace doth*

doth much more abound.—By this, *Manaſſeh*, a Monſter of Barbarity, and an Adept in Iniquity, becomes a Child of forgiving Love, and an Heir of immortal Glory. —— Behold that bitter and bloody Perſecutor *Saul*; when, breathing out Threatenings *, and bent upon Slaughter, he worried the Lambs, and put to Death the Diſciples, of the bleſſed JESUS. Who, upon the

 Principles

* *Acts* ix. 1. Σαυλ ὁ ἔτι ἐμπνεων απειλης και φονυ. *Saul yet breathing out Threatening and Slaughter.* —What a Repreſentation is here of a *Mind*, *mad* with *Rage*, and abandoned to the fierceſt Extremes of Barbarity! I ſcarce know, whether I am more *ſhocked* at the Perſecutor's *ſavage Diſpoſition*, or *charmed* with the Evangeliſt's *lively Deſcription*.—— The Adverb — ἔτι — ſeems to refer to Chap. viii. ver. 3. and has, in this Connection, a peculiar Force. The Havock he had committed, the inoffenſive Families he had *already* ruined, were not ſufficient to aſſwage his vengeful Spirit. They were only a *Taſte*; which, inſtead of *glutting* the Blood-hound, made him more cloſely purſue the Track, and more *eagerly pant* for Deſtruction.—He is *ſtill* athirſt for Violence and Murder. So reſtleſs and inſatiable is his Thirſt, that he even *breathes out* Threatening and Slaughter. His Words are Spears and Arrows, and his Tongue a ſharp Sword. 'Tis as natural for him to *menace* the Chriſtians, as to breathe the Air. —— Nay, they *bleed*, every Hour, every Moment, in the Purpoſes of his rancorous Heart. It is only owing to Want of Power, that every Syllable he utters, every Breath he draws, does not deal about Deaths, and cauſe ſome of the innocent Diſciples to fall.

Principles of human Judgment, would not have pronounced him a Veſſel of Wrath, deſtined to unavoidable Damnation? Nay, would not have been ready to conclude; that, if there were heavier Chains, and a deeper Dungeon, in the World of Woe; they muſt ſurely be reſerved, for ſuch an implacable Enemy of true Godlineſs? Yet, (admire, and adore, the Riches of Almighty Grace!) this *Saul*, is elected into the goodly Fellowſhip of the Prophets; is numbered with the noble Army of Martyrs; and makes a diſtinguiſhed Figure, among the glorious Company of the Apoſtles.—The *Corinthians*, were flagitious, even to a Proverb. Some of them wallowed in ſuch abominable Vices, and habituated themſelves to ſuch outrageous Acts of Injuſtice, as were a Reproach to human Nature. Yet, even theſe Sons of Violence, and Slaves of Senſuality, "were "waſhed; were ſanctified; were juſtified *." *Waſhed*, in the precious Blood of a dying Redeemer; *ſanctified*, by the powerful Operations of the bleſſed Spirit; *juſtified*, through the infinitely tender Mercies of a gracious GOD. And Thoſe, who were once the Burden of the Earth, are now the Joy of Heaven, and the Delight of Angels.

THERE is another Inſtance in Scripture, which moſt loudly publiſhes that ſweeteſt of the Divine

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11.

Divine Names, "The LORD, the LORD GOD, "merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and "abundant in Goodneſs and Truth; keeping "Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, "Tranſgreſſion, and Sin." An Inſtance this, which exceeds all the former; which exceeds whatever can be imagined; which if I was to forget, the very Stones might cry out, and ſound it in my Ears. I mean the Caſe of thoſe Sinners, who *murdered* the *Prince* of *Peace*, and LORD of Glory. Theſe Men, could ſcarce have the Shadow of an Excuſe, for their Crime; hardly a Circumſtance, to extenuate their Guilt. They were well acquainted with his exemplary Converſation; they had often heard his heavenly Doctrines; they were almoſt daily Spectators of his unequalled Miracles. They therefore had all poſſible Reaſon to *honour* Him, as the moſt *illuſtrious* of Beings; and to *receive* Him—into their Houſes—their Arms—their very Hearts—as the moſt *ineſtimable* of Bleſſings. Yet, notwithſtanding all theſe engaging Motives to love Him, even above their own Lives; they ſeize his Perſon; aſperſe his Character; drag him before a heathen Tribunal; and extort a Sentence of Death, againſt Innocence and Holineſs itſelf. Never was the *vileſt Slave*, ſo contumeliouſly abuſed; nor the moſt *execrable Malefactor*, ſo barbarouſly

barbarouſly executed. The Sun was confounded at the ſhocking Scene; and one cannot but wonder, how the avenging Lightnings could withhold their Flaſhes. The Earth trembled at the horrid Deed; and why, why did it not cleave aſunder, and open a Paſſage, for ſuch Blood-thirſty Miſcreants, into the nethermoſt Hell? Shall *Theſe* ever hope to obtain *Forgiveneſs*, from the righteous Judge? Shall not *Theſe* be conſigned over to *inexorable* Wrath, and the *ſevereſt* Torments?—O the miraculous Effects of Divine Grace! O the triumphant Goodneſs of GOD our Saviour! Many even of theſe impious Wretches, at the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, were convinced of their enormous Sin; were wounded with penitential Remorſe; fled to the Sanctuary of the Croſs, and laid hold on the Horns of that Altar; had their Pardon ratified by the baptiſmal Seal; and, continuing in the Apoſtles Doctrine, were made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven: Where they now ſhine, as ſo many everlaſting *Monuments* of moſt diſtinguiſhed *Mercy*; and receive Beatitude paſt Utterance, from that very Redeemer, whom once "with wicked Hands they crucified and ſlew."—Well might the Prophet cry out, with a pleaſing Amazement, "Who is a GOD like unto Thee, "that pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by Tranſ-

"greſ-

" greſſion * ?"—Let all Fleſh remember; let all Fleſh rejoice; That with the LORD there is *ſuch Mercy*, and with his CHRIST *ſuch plentiful Redemption.*

WHAT a grand, and majeſtic *Dome*, is the Sky! And, where are the *Pillars*, that ſupport the ſtately Concave? What Art, moſt exactly true, balanced the Preſſure; and what Props, of inſuperable Strength, ſuſtain the Weight? How is that immeaſurable Arch *upheld*, unſhaken, and unimpaired; while ſo many Generations of buſy Mortals, have *ſunk* and diſappeared, as Bubbles upon the Stream?——If thoſe Stars are of ſuch an amazing Bulk; how are they alſo *faſtened*, in their loſty Situation? By what Miracle in Mechanics, are ſo many Thouſands of ponderous Orbs, kept from falling upon our Heads; kept from daſhing, both the World to Pieces, and it's Inhabitants to Death? Are they hung in golden, or adamantine, *Chains?* Reſt they their enormous Load, on *Rocks* of Marble, or *Columns* of Braſs? No; they are *pendulous* in fluid Æther: and yet, are more immoveably *fixed*, than if the everlaſting Mountains lent their Ridges, for a Baſis. The Almighty Architect *ſtretches out the North*, and it's whole ſtarry Train, *over the empty Place.* He *hangs the Earth*, and all the ethereal

* Mic. vii. 18.

ethereal Globes, *upon nothing* *. Yet are their Foundations laid ſo ſure, that they can "never "be moved at any time."

No unfit Repreſentation, to the *ſincere* Chriſtian, of his *final* Perſeverance †: but ſuch, as points

* Job xxvi. 7.

† With regard to the *final Perſeverance* of the true Believer; I am ſenſible, that this Point is not a little controverted.—The Sentiments, which follow, are *my* ſtedfaſt Belief. It is by no Means proper, in a Work of this Nature, to enter upon a Diſcuſſion of the Subject. Neither have I Room, ſo much as to hint, what might be urged for it's Support.—Let my Reader obſerve, that I am far from delivering it, as eſſential to Chriſtianity, or neceſſary to Salvation. Millions, of the very contrary Conviction, are, I doubt not, high in the Favour of GOD; and in a growing Meetneſs, for his heavenly Kingdom. As I blame none for *rejecting*, none, I hope, will be offended with me for *eſpouſing*, this particular Doctrine. —To be of different Opinions, at leaſt in ſome inferior Inſtances, ſeems an unavoidable Conſequence of our preſent State: where *Ignorance*, in Part, cleaves to the *wiſeſt* Minds; and *Prejudice* eaſily beſets the moſt *impartial* Judgments. It may alſo turn to our common Advantage; and afford Opportunity for exerciſing the *healing* Virtues, of Moderation, Meekneſs, and Forbearance.—Let me only be permitted to aſk, whether this Tenet does not evidently tend, to eſtabliſh the *Comfort* of the Chriſtian; to magnify the *Fidelity* of GOD our Saviour; and whether, far from countenancing Sloth, or encouraging Remiſſneſs, to *know* that our Labour ſhall not be in vain, is not the moſt prevailing Inducement to *abound* in the Work of the LORD? 1 *Cor.* xv. 58.

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points out the Cauſe, which effects it; and conſtitutes the Pledge, which aſcertains it. ——

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Is any One inclined to examine the Reaſons, which have made the Author a Proſelyte to this Perſuaſion? He may find them diſplayed in the celebrated Paper, delivered by the moſt eminent Divines of the Church of *England*, at the ever-memorable Synod of *Dordt*.----(See *Acta Synod. Dodrac.* Part 2. Pag. 403. of the *Latin* Edition, publiſhed in a ſingle Quarto Volume).-----Thoſe, who have no Opportunity of conſulting the Memoirs of that venerable Aſſembly, I would refer to the Works of the indefatigable and very learned *Turretin*, or to thoſe of the candid and elegant *Witſius*.

The lateſt and fulleſt View of the Point, which I ever remember to have met with, in any of our *Engliſh* Writers, is in the *Lime-ſtreet Lectures*; which are a Defence of ſeveral moſt important Doctrines of the Goſpel, and contained in two Octavo Volumes; the united Labours of *nine* modern Divines; moſt of whom, are *well* known to the World, by their *other* evangelical and uſeful Writings. In thoſe Lectures, the final Perſeverance of the Saints, is very particularly ſtated, and, to *my* Apprehenſion at leaſt, moſt ſatisfactorily proved; the Arguments uſually urged againſt it, impartially conſidered, and I cannot but think (with all due Deference to the Judgment of others) unanſwerably confuted.

And here (not to ſwell this Note any farther) I ſhall only juſt hint, that the judicious *Hooker* (an Authority, perhaps, as weighty and unexceptionable as any that can well be produced) gives a *ſolemn Atteſtation* to this Tenet, in a ſhort Diſcourſe on the Perpetuity of Faith, ſubjoined to his *Eccleſiaſtical Polity*. Folio Edition.

His Nature all enfeebled. He is not able, of himſelf, to think a good Thought. He has no *viſible Safeguard*, nor any *Sufficiency* of his *own*. And yet, whole Legions of formidable Enemies, are combined to compaſs his Ruin. The *World*, lays unnumbered Shares for his Feet: the *Devil*, is inceſſantly urging the Siege, by a Multitude of fiery Darts, or wily Temptations: the *Fleſh*, like a perfidious Inmate, under Colour of Friendſhip, and a ſpecious Pretence of Pleaſure, is always forward to betray his Integrity. —— But, amidſt all theſe threatening Circumſtances, of perſonal Weakneſs, and imminent Danger, an *inviſible Aid* is his Defence. "*I will uphold* "*thee*, ſays the bleſſed GOD, *with the Right* "*Hand of my Righteouſneſs* *." O comfortable Truth! The Arm, which fixes the Stars in their Orders, and guides the Planets in their Courſe, is ſtretched out to preſerve the Heirs of Salvation. —"*My Sheep*, adds the great Redeemer, *are* "*mine, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall* "*any pluck them out of my Hand* †." What Words are theſe! And did they come from HIM, who hath all Power in Heaven, and on Earth? And were they ſpoke to every unfeigned, though feeble Follower, of the great Shepherd? Then, *Omnipotence* itſelf muſt be *vanquiſhed*; before *they*

* Iſa. xli. 10. † John x. 28.

they can be *deſtroyed*, either by the Seductions of Fraud, or the Aſſaults of Violence.

IF you aſk therefore, *What Security* we have of enduring to the End, and continuing faithful unto Death?—The very *ſame* that eſtabliſhes the Heavens, and ſettles the Ordinances of the Univerſe. Can *theſe* be thrown into Confuſion *? Then, may the *true Believer* draw back unto Perdition. Can the Sun be diſlodged from his Sphere, and ruſh lawleſly through the Sky? Then, and then only, can the Faith of GOD's Elect † be finally overthrown.—Be of good Courage then, my Soul; rely on thoſe Divine Succours, which are ſo *ſolemnly ſtipulated*, ſo *faithfully promiſed*. Though thy *Grace* be languid, as the glimmering *Spark*; though the *Overflowings* of *Corruption*, threaten it with total Extinction; yet, ſince the great JEHOVAH has undertaken to cheriſh the dim Principle, "many Waters can-"not quench it, nor all Floods drown it." Nay, though it were feeble as the *ſmoking Flax* ‡, Almighty

* Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. † Tit. i. 2.

‡ The *Tenderneſs*, and *Faithfulneſs*, of GOD to his People, are finely pictured by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xlii. ver. 3. Which Paſſage, becauſe of it's rich Conſolation, and uncommon Beauty, is deſervedly adopted by St. *Matthew*, and ingrafted into the Syſtem of evangelical Truths.——*He will not* himſelf *break*, nor ſuffer to be broken by any other,

mighty Goodneſs ſtands engaged, to augment the Heat; to raiſe the Fire, and feed the Flame; till it beam forth, a *Lamp* of immortal *Glory*, in the Heavens.

AND, as to the *Faithfulneſs* of a covenanting GOD; this may be emblematically ſeen, in the *Stability* of the heavenly *Bodies*, and the *Perpetuity* of their *Motions* *. —— Thoſe that are *fixed*, continue unalterably in their Stations. No injurious Shocks; no Violence of conflicting Elements; are able to diſplace thoſe *everlaſting Hinges*, on which dependent Worlds revolve. Through the whole Flight of Time, they recede

the bruiſed Reed; nor quench the ſmoking Flax. Was it poſſible, to have choſen two more delicate, and expreſſive Repreſentations? Could any Image, be more ſignificant of a very infirm, and enfeebled *Faith*; than the flexile *Reed*, that bends before every Wind: which, beſides it's natural Weakneſs, is made abundantly weaker by being *bruiſed:* and ſo, ready to fall in pieces of itſelf? —— Nor could any Thing, with a more pathetical Exactneſs, deſcribe the extreme Imbecillity, of that other Principle of the Divine Life, *Love*; than the State of the *Flax*, which is but juſt beginning to burn; and, conſequently, liable to be put out by the leaſt Blaſt: or rather of the *Wick* of the Lamp, when it is not kindled into ſo much as a glimmering Flame, but only *breathing Smoke*, and uncertain whether it ſhall take Fire or no. *Matt.* xii. 20.

* Pſal. cxix. 89, 90.

cede not, ſo much as a Hair's Breadth, from the preciſe central Point of their reſpective Syſtems.—While the *Erratic* perform their prodigious Stages, without any Intermiſſion, or the leaſt Embaraſſment. How ſoon, and how eaſily, is the moſt finiſhed Piece of *human Machinery* diſconcerted! But all the *celeſtial Movements*, are ſo nicely adjuſted; all their Operations, ſo critically proportioned; and their mutual Dependencies, ſo ſtrongly connected; that they prolong their beneficial Courſes, throughout all Ages. While *mighty Cities* are overwhelmed with Ruin, and their very Names loſt in Oblivion: While *vaſt Empires* are ſwept from their Foundations, and leave not ſo much as a ſhadowy Trace of their antient Magnificence: While *all terreſtrial* Things are ſubject to Viciſſitude, and fluctuating in Uncertainty: *Theſe* are permanent in their Duration; invariable in their Functions; "not "one faileth."—Who doubts the *conſtant Succeſſion*, of Day and Night; or the *regular Returns*, of Summer and Winter? And why, O! why ſhould we doubt the *Veracity* of GOD, or diſtruſt the *Accompliſhment* of his holy Word? Can the Ordinances of Heaven depart? Then only can GOD forget to be gracious; or neglect the Performance of his Promiſe.——Nay, our LORD gives us *yet firmer Ground* of Affiance. He affords us a ſurer Bottom for our Faith, than the

fundamental Laws of the Univerſe. "Heaven "and Earth, He ſays, may paſs away; but, not "one *Jot* or *Tittle* of his Word, ſhall fall ſhort "of it's Purpoſe." His ſacred Word, whatever may obſtruct it; whoever may oppoſe it; ſhall be fulfilled to the very uttermoſt.

O *powerful Word!* How aſtoniſhing is it's Efficacy! When this Word was iſſued forth, a *thouſand Worlds* emerged out of nothing. And, ſhould the mighty Orders be repeated, *a thouſand more* would ſpring into Exiſtence. By this Word, the vaſt Syſtem of created Things is *upheld*, in immutable *Conſtancy:* but, ſhould it give Command, or ceaſe to exert it's Energy; the univerſal Frame would be diſſolved, and all Nature revert to her original Chaos. And this very Word is *pledged* for the Safety, the Comfort, the Happineſs of *the Godly.* This inviolable, this Almighty Word, *ſpeaks* in all the *Promiſes* of the Goſpel.——How ſtrangely infatuated are our Souls, that we ſhould value it ſo little! What Infidels are we in fact, that we ſhould depend upon it no more! Did it *create*, whatever has a Being; and ſhall it not *work* Faith, in our Breaſts? Do unnumbered Worlds, owe their *Support* to this Word; and ſhall it not be ſufficient, to *buoy* up our Souls in Troubles, or eſtabliſh them in Trials? Is it the *Life* of the Univerſe, and ſhall it be a *dead* Letter to Mankind?

IF I wiſh to be heard, when I implore heavenly Bleſſings; is not *this Privilege* moſt clearly *made over* to my Enjoyment, in that well known Text, "Aſk, and it ſhall be given you *?" —If I long for the eternal Comforter, to dwell in my Heart, and ſanctify my Nature; have I not an *apparent Title* to this *high Prerogative*, conferred in that ſweet aſſertive Interrogation, "How much "more ſhall your heavenly Father, give the Holy "Spirit to thoſe that aſk him †?"—If I earneſtly covet the ineſtimable Treaſures, that are compriſed in the great IMMANUEL's Mediation; can I have a *firmer Claim* to the *noble Portion*, than is granted in that moſt precious Scripture, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no-wiſe "caſt out ‡?—What Aſſurance, of being intereſted in theſe unſpeakable Mercies, would I deſire? What *Form* of *Conveyance*; what *Deed* of *Settlement*; were it left to my own Option, ſhould I chooſe? Here is the Word of a King; the King immortal and inviſible; all whoſe Declarations ‖ are Truth itſelf.——If a Monarch

* Matt. vii. 7. † Luke xi. 13.

‡ John vi. 37.

‖ —— If *theſe* fail,
The pillar'd Firmament is Rottenneſs,
And Earth's Baſe built on Stubble.

MILT. *Comus.*

beſtow Immunities on a Body of Men, and *confirm* them by an authentic *Charter*; no one controverts, no one queſtions, their Right to the Royal Favours. And why ſhould we ſuſpect the *Validity* of thoſe glorious *Grants*, which are made by the everlaſting Sovereign of Nature; which he has alſo *ratified* by an Oath, and *ſealed* with the Blood of his Son?—Corporations may be disfranchiſed, and Charters revoked. Even Mountains may be removed, and Stars drop from their Spheres. But a Tenure, *founded* on the Divine Promiſe, is unalienably *ſecure*; is *laſting*, as Eternity itſelf.

WE have endeavoured to ſpell out a *Syllable*, of the eternal Name, in the Wonders of the Sky. We have catched a *Glimpſe*, of the Almighty's *Glory*, from the Luſtre of innumerable Stars. But, would we behold all his Excellencies, pourtrayed in *full Perfection*; and drawn to the *very Life*; let us attentively conſider the REDEEMER. —I obſerve, there are ſome Parts of the Firmament, in which the *Stars* ſeem, as it were, to *cluſter*. They are ſown thicker, they lie cloſer, than uſual; and ſtrike the Eye, with redoubled Splendor. Like the Jewels on a Crown, they mingle their Beams; and reflect a reciprocal Increaſe of Brilliancy, on each other.——And is there not ſuch an Aſſemblage, ſuch a *Conſtella-*

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tion of the *Divine Honours*, moſt amiably effulgent in the bleſſed JESUS?

DOES not infinite *Wiſdom* * ſhine, with ſurpaſſing Brightneſs, in CHRIST? To the making of a World, there was no Obſtacle; but to the Saving of Man, there ſeemed to be unſurmountable Bars. If the Rebel is ſuffered to eſcape; where is the *inflexible Juſtice*, which denounces "Death as the Wages of Sin?" If the Offender is thoroughly pardoned; where is the *inviolable Veracity*, which has ſolemnly declared, "The "Soul that ſinneth, ſhall die?" Theſe awful Attributes are ſet in terrible Array; and, like an impenetrable Battalion, oppoſe the Salvation of apoſtate Mankind. Who can ſuggeſt a Method, to *abſolve* the traiterous Race, and yet *vindicate* the Honours of Almighty Sovereignty? This is an Intricacy, which, the moſt exalted of finite Intelligencies, are unable to clear.—But, behold the *unſearchable Secret* revealed! revealed in the wonderful Redemption, accompliſhed by a dying Saviour! So *plainly revealed*, that "He who runs "may read;" and even *Babes* underſtand, what Minds of the deepeſt Penetration could not contrive.——The Son of GOD, taking our Nature, obeys the Law, and undergoes Death, in our ſtead. By this Means, the threatened *Curſe* is executed, in all it's *Rigour*; and free *Grace* is ex-

 erciſed,

* See the next Note.

erciſed, in all it's *Riches*. Juſtice *maintains* it's *Rights*, and, with a ſteady Hand, adminiſters impartial Vengeance; while Mercy *diſpenſes* her *Pardons*, and welcomes the repentant Criminal into it's tendereſt Embraces. Hereby, the ſeemingly thwarting Attributes are reconciled: and the Sinner is ſaved, not only in *full Conſiſtence*, with the Honour of the ſupreme Perfections; but to the moſt *illuſtrious Manifeſtation*, of them all.

WHERE does the Divine *Power* * ſo ſignally exert itſelf, as in the *Croſs* of CHRIST, and in the *Conqueſts* of *Grace?*——Our LORD, in his loweſt State of Humiliation, gained a more glorious Victory; than when, through the dividing Sea, and the waſte howling Wilderneſs, He "rode upon his Chariots and Horſes of Salva-"tion." When his Hands were *riveted*, with Irons, to the bloody Tree; He *diſarmed* Death of it's Sting, and *plucked* the Prey from the Jaws of Hell. Then, even then, while He was crucified in *Weakneſs*, He vanquiſhed the *ſtrong Man*, and ſubdued our moſt formidable Enemies: Even then,

* CHRIST, *the Wiſdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD.* 1 Cor. i. 24.——*To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church* (by the amazing Contrivance, Circumſtances, and Accompliſhment of it's Redemption) *the* deep, extenſive and (πολυποικιλος) *greatly diverſified Wiſdom of GOD.* Eph. iii. 10.

then, He ſpoiled Principalities; triumphed over the Powers of Darkneſs; and led Captivity captive.—And now He is exalted to his heavenly Throne, with what a prevailing Efficacy does his Grace go forth, "conquering, and to con-"quer!" By this, the *Slaves* of *Sin* are reſcued from their Bondage, and reſtored to the *Liberty* of *Righteouſneſs*. By this, depraved Wretches, whoſe Appetites were *ſenſual*, and their Diſpoſitions *deviliſh*; are not only renewed, but renewed after the Image of GOD, and made Partakers of a *Divine Nature*. Millions, Millions of loſt Creatures are ſnatched, by the Interpoſition of Grace, like *Brands* from the Burning; and, tranſlated into everlaſting Manſions, ſhine brighter than the *Stars*, ſhine bright as the *Sun*, in the Kingdom of their Father.

WOULD you ſee a more complete Diſplay of the Divine *Purity*, than the unſpotted Firmament; the Spangles of Heaven; or the golden Fountain of Day? Contemplate the ſame ſacred Being. He is the Brightneſs of his Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon. In his immaculate Nature; in his heavenly Tempers; in his moſt holy Life; the *moral Perfections* of the *Deity* are repreſented, to the higheſt Advantage *.—Hark! how *Mercy*, with her charm-

* In this Senſe, that Saying of our LORD is eminently true, *He that hath ſeen ME, hath ſeen the FATHER.* John xiv. 9.

ing Voice, ſpeaks in all He *utters*.——See! how *Benevolence* pours her choiceſt Stores, in all He *does*.—Did ever *Compaſſion* look ſo amiably ſoft, as in thoſe pitying *Tears*; which ſwelled his Eyes, and trickled down his Cheeks, to bedew the *Rancour* of his inveterate Enemies?—Was it poſſible for *Patience* to aſſume a Form ſo lovely; as that ſweetly-winning Conduct, which bore the *Contradiction* of *Sinners*: which intreated the Obſtinate, to be reconciled; beſought the Guilty, not to die?—In a Word; from other Things, we may collect ſome *ſcattered Rays* of JEHOVAH's Glory; but in CHRIST they are all *united*; and beam forth, with the ſtrongeſt Radiance, the moſt delightful Effulgence. *Out of Sion*, and in *Sion*'s great Redeemer, *hath GOD appeared in perfect Beauty.*

SEARCH then, my Soul, above all other Purſuits, ſearch the *Records* of *redeeming Love*. Let theſe be the principal Objects of thy Study. Here, employ thyſelf, with the moſt unwearied Aſſiduity.——*In theſe, are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge* *. *Such Wiſdom*; as the

* *Coloſ.* ii. 3.——Not a mean Degree, but a *Treaſure*; not one Treaſure, but *many*; not many only, but *all* Treaſures, of true Wiſdom, and ſaving Knowledge; are in CHRIST, and his glorious Goſpel. ——The *ſuperior Excellency* of thoſe Treaſures ſeems to

the very Angels, are intenſely deſirous, to become more intimately acquainted with * : *Such Knowledge*; as qualifies the Poſſeſſor, if not for Offices of Dignity on Earth, yet for the moſt honourable Advancements in the Kingdom of Heaven. Diſunited from which, all Application is but *elaborate Impertinence*; and all Science, no better than

to be finely intimated, in that other Expreſſion——*αποκρυφοι*—*hid*; or *laid up*, with the utmoſt Care, and in a Place of the greateſt Safety. Not left at all Adventures, to be *ſtumbled upon*, by every giddy *Wanderer*; or to *fall into* the Arms, of the yawning *Sluggard:* but, like *Jewels* of the brighteſt Luſtre, or *Riches* of the higheſt Value, *kept in Store* to adorn and reward the diligent Seacher.

* This, I believe, is the *Import* of the Apoſtle's Language, though it is not a *literal* Tranſlation of —εις α επιθυμουσιν αγγελοι παρακυψαι. 1 *Pet.* i. 12.——I never had ſo lively an Apprehenſion of the beautiful Significancy of the laſt Word, as when I have attended a *Diſſection* of ſome Part of the *animal* Body. In order to diſcern the *Minutiæ* of the admirable Frame; the *latent* Wonders of Art and Mechaniſm; the Eye is ſo ſharpened, and it's Application ſo *intenſely bended*, as gives a very juſt *experimental Comment* on that expreſſive Phraſe, παρακυψαι. ——With ſuch earneſt Attention, is the everlaſting Goſpel contemplated, by the *Angelic* Orders! How much more, if it were poſſible, does it deſerve the devout and inceſſant Conſideration of *human* Minds? Since by *them*, it is not only to be *ſpeculated*, as a bright and raviſhing Diſplay of the Divine Attributes; but to be *applied* to their fallen Nature, as a moſt benign Scheme of *recovering* Grace; as the *ſure* and *only* Method of obtaining Life and Immortality.

than *pompous Ignorance*.—Theſe alſo contain the *faultleſs Model* of Duty, and the *nobleſt Motives* to Obedience. Nothing ſo powerful, to work a lively Faith, and a joyful Hope; as an attentive Conſideration, of our LORD's unutterable Merits. Nothing ſo ſovereign, to antidote the peſtilential Influence of the World, and deliver our Affections from a Slavery to ignoble Objects; as an habitual Remembrance, of his extreme Agonies. The genuine, the ever-fruitful *Source* of all *Morality*, is the unfeigned Love of CHRIST; and the Croſs, the CROSS, is the appointed * *Altar*, from which we may fetch a *Coal* †, to inkindle this ſacred Fire.

BEHOLD, therefore, *the Man*; the matchleſs and ſtupendous Man; who gave us a Pattern of the moſt exalted Virtue, and was Himſelf the Mirror of every Divine Perfection. Examine the Memoirs of his exemplary Converſation. Contemplate that *Choir* of *Graces*, which were aſſociated in his Mind, and ſhed the higheſt Luſtre on all his Actions: familiarize to thy Thoughts his heavenly Diſcourſes, and enter into the very Spirit

* *And I*, ſays our LORD, *if I be lifted up from the Earth*, and extended on the Croſs, *will draw all Men unto me:* will give ſuch a rich and tranſcendent Diſplay of *my* Love, as ſhall conſtitute the moſt powerful and prevailing Attractive of *theirs*. *John* xii. 32.

† Alluding to *Iſaiah* vi. 6.

Spirit of his *refined Doctrines:* get the one tranſfuſed into thy Breaſt, the other tranſcribed in thy Life.——Follow Him to the *laſt Scene* of the moſt innocent and uſeful Courſe, that was ever paſſed on Earth. Follow Him to *Calvary*'s horrid Eminence; to *Calvary*'s fatal Cataſtrophe. Be thy moſt conſtant Attention fixed, on that lovely and ſorrowful Spectacle. Behold the ſpotleſs Victim, nailed to the Tree, and ſtabbed to the Heart. Hear Him pouring out *Prayers*, for his *Murderers*; before He poured out his *Soul*, for *Tranſgreſſors*. See the Wounds, that ſtream with Forgiveneſs, and *bleed Balm* for a diſtempered World. O! ſee the Juſtice of the Almighty and his Goodneſs; his Mercy and his Vengeance; all his *tremendous* and *gracious* Attributes manifeſted: manifeſted with inexpreſſible Splendor, in that moſt *ignominious*, and yet *grandeſt*, of Tranſactions.

SINCE God is ſo inconceivably great, as theſe his marvellous Works declare;

Since the great Sovereign ſends Ten thouſand
Worlds,
To tell us, He reſides above them all,
In Glory's unapproachable Receſs *;

What

* For this *Quotation*, and ſeveral valuable *Hints*, I acknowledge myſelf indebted to thoſe beautiful and ſublime Poems, intitled *Night-Thoughts*.—Of which

What an *honourable*, as well as advantageous Employ, is *Prayer?* By Prayer, we have *Acceſs* to that moſt mighty *Potentate*; whoſe Sceptre ſways univerſal Nature, and whoſe rich Regalia fill the Skies with Luſtre. Prayer, places us in his Preſence-Chamber; while "the Blood of "ſprinkling," procures us a gracious Audience. —Shall I then *bluſh* to be found proſtrate, before the Throne of Grace? Shall I be *aſhamed* to have it known; that I offer up ſocial Supplications in the Family, or am conſcientious in obſerving my private Retirements? Rather, let me *glory* in this unſpeakable Privilege. Let me reckon it the nobleſt Poſture, to fall low on my *Knees* before his Footſtool; and the higheſt Honour, to enjoy Communion with his moſt exalted Majeſty.—Incomparably more noble, than to *ſit*, in *Perſon*, on the triumphal Chariot; or to *ſtand*, in *Effigy*, amidſt the Temple of Worthies.

How

I ſhall only ſay, That I receive freſh Pleaſure, and richer Improvement, from every renewed Peruſal. And, I think, I ſhall have Reaſon to bleſs the indulgent Beſtower of all Wiſdom, for thoſe inſtructive and animating Compoſitions, even in my laſt Moments. Than which, nothing can more emphatically ſpeak their very *ſuperior Excellency*, nor give a more *ſolid Satisfaction* to their worthy Author.—Happy ſhould I think myſelf, if theſe *little Sketches* of contemplative Devotion, might be honoured with the *moſt inferior* Degree, of the ſame Succeſs; and receive a Teſtimony, not from the Voice of Fame, but from the dying Lips of ſome edified Chriſtian.

How ineſtimable, in ſuch a View, is that Promiſe; which ſo often occurs in the prophetic Writings, and is the crowning Benefit of the new Covenant, *I will be thy GOD* *?—Will this ſupremely excellent, and Almighty Being, vouchſafe to be my Portion? To ſettle upon a poor Sinner, not the Heritage of a *County*; nor the Poſſeſſion of the whole *Earth*; but his *own* ever-bleſſed *Self?* May I then, through his free condeſcending Grace, and the unknown Merits of his Son, look upon all theſe infinitely noble Attributes as my Treaſure? May I regard the *Wiſdom*, which ſuperintends ſuch a Multitude of Worlds, as my *Guide*; the *Power*, which produced, and preſerves them in Exiſtence, as my *Guard*; the *Goodneſs*, which, by an endleſs Communication of Favours, renders them all ſo many Habitations of Happineſs, as *my exceeding great Reward?*——What a Fund of Felicity, is included in ſuch a Bleſſing? How often does the *Iſraelitiſh* Prince exult in the Aſſurance, that this unutterable and boundleſs Good is his own? Intereſted in this, he bids Defiance to every Evil, that can be dreaded; and reſts in certain Expectation of every Bleſſing, that can be deſired. The *LORD is my Light, and my Salvation; whom then ſhall I fear? The LORD*, with an Air of Exultation, he repeats both his Affiance, and his Challenge, *is the Strength of my Life; of whom*

* Heb. viii. 10.

whom then ſhall I be afraid *?* Nothing ſo effectual, as this appropriating Faith, to inſpire a *Dignity of Mind*, ſuperior to tranſitory Trifles; or to create a *Calmneſs* of *Temper*, unalarmed by vulgar Fears, unappalled by Death itſelf.—*The LORD is my Shepherd*, ſays the ſame truly gallant and heroic Perſonage: *therefore ſhall I lack nothing* †. How is it poſſible, He ſhould ſuffer Want, who has the All-ſufficient Fulneſs for his Supply? So long as unerring Wiſdom, is capable of *contriving* the Means; and uncontroulable Power, is able to *execute* them; ſuch a One, cannot fail of being ſafe and happy; whether he continue amidſt the Viciſſitudes of Time, or depart into the unchangeable Eternity.

HERE, let us ſtand a Moment, and contemplate this *great* GOD, together with *ourſelves*, in a relative View—If we reflect on the Works of *material* Nature, their Number incomprehenſible, and their Extent unmeaſurable: each of them apart, ſo admirably framed; the Connections of the whole, ſo exquiſitely regulated; and all derived, from one and the ſame glorious Agent.—If we recollect the far more noble Accompliſhments of elegant Taſte, and diſcerning Judgment; of refined Paſſions, and exalted Sentiments; which are to be found, among the ſeveral Orders of *underſtanding* Beings: and all of them flowing, in rich Emanations, from the one

* Pſalm xxvii. 1. † Pſalm xxiii. 1.

one ſole Fountain of intellectual Light.——If we farther conſider this Author of material Beauty, and moral Excellency, as a *Guardian*, a *Governor*, and *Benefactor* to all his Creatures: ſupporting their Being, and protecting their Perſons, by an ever-watchful Providence; preſiding over their Affairs, and cauſing all Events to terminate in the moſt extenſive Good; heaping, with unremitted Liberality, his Benefits upon every capable Object, and making the whole Circle of Exiſtence a Seminary of Happineſs.—Is it poſſible for the human Heart, under ſuch captivating Views, to be *indifferent* towards this ever-bleſſed Original of all Good? Can Any be ſo immerſed in Stupidity, as to ſay unto the Almighty——in the Language of an irreligious Temper, and licentious Life, to ſay? "Depart "from Us; we implore not thy Favour; nor "deſire the Knowledge of thy Ways."——Wonder, O *Heavens!* be amazed, O *Earth!* and let all the Inhabitants of *both* join their Aſtoniſhment, at this unparalleled Complication of diſingenuous, ungrateful, and deſtructive Perverſeneſs!

IF we conſider our *own imperfect* State; frail in our Bodies; enfeebled in our Minds; in every Part of our Conſtitution, and in all the Occurrences of Life, "like a tottering Wall, or a "broken Hedge."—If we ſurvey our *indigent* State;

State; without Holineſs; without Happineſs; our Poſſeſſion of preſent Conveniencies, entirely dependent on GOD's ſovereign Pleaſure; yea, forfeited, juſtly forfeited, with every future Hope, by a Thouſand aggravated Iniquities.—If we add the various *Diſaſters* of our Condition; agitated by tumultuous Paſſions; oppreſſed with diſpiriting Fears; held in Suſpenſe by a Variety of perplexing * Cares; liable to Pains, and expoſed to Troubles; Troubles, from every Quarter; Troubles, of every Kind;—Can we, amidſt ſo many Wants, under ſuch deplorable Infirmities, and ſubject to ſuch diſaſtrous Accidents,

* All that are converſant with the original Language of the New Teſtament, are ſufficiently apprized, that *this* is the *Significancy* of that important Diſſuaſive, urged by our LORD, μη μεριμνασητε, Mat. vi. 25.—I beg Leave, for the ſake of the *unlearned* Reader, to obſerve; That our Tranſlation, though for the moſt part faithful and excellent, has here ſlipt into a very great Impropriety, and miſrepreſented our Divine Maſter's Meaning. *Take no thought for your Body*, is not only not the *true* Senſe, but the very *Reverſe* of the Scriptural Doctrine. We are required to take a *prudent* and *moderate* Thought, for the Neceſſaries of Life. The Sluggard, who neglects this decent Precaution, is ſeverely reprimanded; is ſent to one of the meaneſt Animals, to bluſh for his Folly, and learn Diſcretion from her Conduct, *Prov.* v. 6. Our Saviour's Precept, and the exact Senſe of his Expreſſion, is, Take no *anxious Thought*; indulge no *perplexing* Care; *no ſuch* Care, as may argue an unreaſonable *Diſtruſt* of Providence; or may *rend* and *tear* your Minds with diſtreſſing, with pernicious Solicitude.

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MAY I, by a *believing Application*, ſolace myſelf in this everlaſting Source of Love, Perfection, and Joy! Grant me this Requeſt, and I aſk no more.—Only, that I may expect, not with a *reluctant Anxiety*, but with a *ready Chearfulneſs*, the Arrival of that important Hour; when this Veil of Fleſh ſhall drop, and all the Shadows of Mortality flee away. When I ſhall no longer complain of *obſcure* Knowledge; *languid* Affections; and *imperfect* Fruition—But, ſhall ſee the uncreated and immortal Majeſty: *ſee* Him, not in this diſtant and unaffecting Method, of reaſoning from his Works; but with

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the moſt clear and direct Intuition of the Mind.—When I ſhall *love* Him, not with a cold and contracted Spirit; but with the moſt lively and enlarged Emotions of Gratitude.—When I ſhall abundantly *enjoy* the Light of his Countenance; and be united, intimately, inſeparably, united to his all-glorious GODHEAD.—Take, ye *Ambitious*, un-envied and un-oppoſed, take to yourſelves the *Toys* of State. May I be enabled to *rejoice* in this bleſſed Hope; and to *triumph* in that amiable, that adorable, that delightful Name, the LORD MY GOD! And I ſhall ſcarce beſtow a Thought, on the ſplendid Pageantry of the World; unleſs it be to *deſpiſe* it's empty Pomp, and to *pity* it's deluded Admirers.

ALL theſe Bodies, though immenſe in their Size, and almoſt infinite in their Multitude, are *obedient* to the Divine *Command*. The GOD of Wiſdom "telleth their Numbers," and is intimately acquainted with their various Properties. The GOD of Power "calleth them all by their "Names," and aſſigns them whatſoever Office He pleaſes.—He *marſhals* all the ſtarry Legions, with infinitely greater Eaſe, and nicer Order; than the moſt expert *General*, arranges his diſciplined *Troops*. He appoints their *Poſts*; he marks their *Route*; he fixes the Time for their *Return*. The Poſts, which he appoints, they occupy, without fail. In the Route, which he ſettles,

ſettles, they perſevere, without the leaſt Deviation. And are punctual to the Inſtant *, which he fixes for their Return.—He has given them a *Law*, which, through a long Revolution of Ages, ſhall not be broken: unleſs his ſovereign Will interpoſes, for it's *Repeal*. Then indeed, their Motions are controuled; their Action is ſuſpended; and their Influence ſealed up.—The *Sun*, at his Creation, received a Command to travel through the Heavens. Since which, he has conſtantly performed the great Circuit; and "rejoiced, as a Giant, to run his Race." But, when it was requiſite to ſubſerve the Purpoſes of Divine Love, the Orders are countermanded; the flaming Courier ſtops his Career; *ſtands ſtill* in *Gibeon* †; and, for the Conveniency of the choſen People, holds back the falling Day.—— The *Moon* too was diſpatched with a Charge,

 never

* "The Planets, and all the innumerable Hoſt of "heavenly Bodies, perform their Courſes and Revo- "lutions, with ſo much Certainty and Exactneſs, as "never once to fail; but, for almoſt 6000 Years, "come conſtantly about to the ſame Period, in the "hundredth Part of a Minute." *Stackhouſe*'s Hiſt. Bib.

† This is ſpoken in Conformity to the Scripture Language, and according to the common Notion. With reſpect to the Power, which effected the Alteration; it is much the ſame Thing, and alike miraculous; whether the Sun, or the Earth, be ſuppoſed to move.

never to intermit her revolving Motion, till Day and Night come to an End. But, when the Children of Providence, were to be favoured with an uncommon Continuation of Light, ſhe halts in her March; makes a ſolemn Pauſe *in the Valley of Ajalon* *; and delays to bring on her attendant Train of Shadows.—When the Enemies of the LORD are to be diſcomfited, the *Stars* likewiſe are levied into the Service; the Stars are armed, and take the Field; *the Stars, in their Courſes, fought againſt Siſera* †.

So

* *Joſh.* x. 12, 13.—The Prophet *Habakkuk*, according to his lofty Manner, celebrates this Event; and points out, in very poetical Diction, the Deſign of ſo ſurpriſing a Miracle.—*The Sun and Moon ſtood ſtill in their Habitation: In the Light*, the long-continued and miraculous Light, *thy Arrows*, edged with Deſtruction, *walked* on their awful Errand; *in the clear Shining* of the Day, protracted for this very Purpoſe, *thy glittering Spear*, launched by thy People, but guided by thy Hand, ſprung to it's Prey. *Hab.* iii. 11.

† *Judg.* v. 20.—The ſcriptural Phraſe *fought againſt*, will, I hope, be a proper *Warrant* for every Expreſſion, I have uſed on this Occaſion.——The Paſſage is generally ſuppoſed to ſignify, that ſome very dreadful *Meteors* (which the Stars were thought to influence); ſuch as fierce Flaſhes of *Lightning*; impetuous Showers of *Rain*; and rapid Storms of *Hail*; were employed by the Almighty to terrify, annoy, and overthrow the Enemies of *Iſrael*. If ſo, there cannot be a more clear and lively Paraphraſe on the Text, than thoſe fine Lines of a *Jewiſh* Writer.——

His

So dutiful is material Nature; ſo obſequious, in *all* her *Forms*, to her Creator's Pleaſure!—The bellowing *Thunders*, liſten to his Voice; and the vollied *Lightnings*, obſerve the Direction of his Eye. The flying *Storm*, and impetuous *Whirlwind*, wear his Yoke. The raging *Waves* revere his Nod: they ſhake the Earth; and daſh the Skies; yet, never offer to paſs the Bounds, which He has ſet.—Even the *planetary Spheres*; though vaſtly *larger*, than this wide-extended Earth; are, in his Hand, as *Clay* in the Hands of the Potter: though, far *ſwifter* than the northern Blaſt, they ſweep the long Tracts of Æther; yet, are they *guided* by his *Reins*, and preciſely execute whatever He injoins.—All thoſe enormous *Globes* of *central Fire*, which beam through the boundleſs Azure; in compariſon of which, an Army of Planets, were like a Swarm of Summer Inſects; thoſe, even thoſe, are conformable to his Will, as the *melting Wax* to the impreſſed

 Seal.

His ſevere Wrath ſhall HE ſharpen for a Sword; and the World *ſhall* fight *with him* againſt *the Ungodly. Then, ſhall the* right-aiming Thunderbolts *go abroad; and from the* Clouds, *as from a* well-drawn Bow, *ſhall they fly to the Mark. And* Hail-ſtones, *full of Wrath, ſhall be caſt as out of a Stone Bow; and the* Water *of the Sea ſhall rage againſt them; and the* Floods (as was the Caſe with the River *Kiſhon*) *ſhall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty* Wind *ſhall ſtand up againſt them; and, like* a Storm, *ſhall blow them away.* Wiſd. v. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Seal.—And if *all*, ALL is *obedient*, throughout the whole Aſcent of Things, ſhall *Man* be the *only Rebel?* Shall our unruly *Appetites*, reject the Government of Almighty Goodneſs? Shall theſe headſtrong *Paſſions*, break looſe from Divine Reſtraint; and run wild, in exorbitant Sallies, after their own Imaginations?

O MY Soul, be ſtung with Remorſe, and overwhelmed with Confuſion, at ſuch a Thought! Is it not a righteous Thing, that the bleſſed GOD ſhould ſway the Sceptre, with the moſt abſolute Authority, over all the Creatures, which his Power has formed? Eſpecially over thoſe Creatures; whom his diſtinguiſhing Favour, has endued with the noble Principle of Reaſon, and made capable of a bliſsful Immortality? Sure, if all the Ranks of inanimate Exiſtence, ſubmit to their Maker's Decree, by the *Neceſſity* of their Nature; this more excellent Race of Beings, ſhould pay their equal Homage, by the *willing Compliance* of their Affections *.——Come then, all

* This Argument, I acknowledge, is not *abſolutely concluſive:* But it is *popular* and *ſtriking*. Nor can I think myſelf obliged, in ſuch a Work; where *Fancy* bears a conſiderable Sway; to proceed always with the Caution and Exactneſs, of a *Diſputer* in the *Schools*. If there be ſome Appearance of Analogy, between the Fact and the Inference, it ſeems ſufficient for my Purpoſe;

all ye *Faculties* of my *Mind*; come, all ye *Powers* of my *Body*; give up yourſelves, without a Moment's Delay, without the leaſt Reſerve, to his Governance. Stand like dutiful Servants, at his Footſtool; in an everlaſting Readineſs, to *do* whatſoever He requires; to *be* whatſoever he appoints: To further, with *united* Efforts, the Purpoſes of his Glory in this earthly Scene: or elſe to *ſeparate*, without Reluctance, at his Summons; the *one*, to ſleep in the ſilent Duſt; the *other*, to advance his Honour, in ſome remoter Colony of his Kingdom.——Thus, may I join with all the Works of the LORD, in all Places of his Dominion, to recognize his univerſal Supremacy; and proclaim

Purpoſe; though the Deduction ſhould not be neceſſary, or ſtrictly ſyllogiſtical.—One of the *Apoſtolic Fathers*, has an affecting and truly ſublime Paragraph, which runs intirely in this Form; Ηλιος τε και σεληνη, ασερων τε χοροι, κατα την διαταγην αυτε εν ομονοια, διχα πασης παρεκβασεως, εξελισσουσιν τας επ[illegible]εταγμενας αυτοις οριομας. *The Sun, the Moon, and the ſtarry Choir, without the leaſt Deviation, and with the utmoſt Harmony, perform the Revolutions appointed them by the ſupreme Decree.* From which Remark, and abundance of other ſimilar Inſtances, obſervable in the Oeconomy of Nature; he exhorts Chriſtians, to a *cordial Unanimity* among themſelves, and a *dutiful Obedience* to GOD. Vid. *Clem. Roman.* 1 *Ep. ad Corinth. Sect.* 20.—See alſo a beautiful Ode in Dr. *Watts*'s Lyric Poems, intituled, *The Compariſon and Complaint*, which turns intirely upon this very Thought.

Him *Sovereign* of *Souls*, as well as *Ruler* of *Worlds*.

AT my firſt coming abroad, all theſe *Luminaries* were totally *eclipſed*, by the overpowering Luſtre of the Sun. They were all placed in the very ſame Stations; and played the ſame ſprightly Beams; yet, not one was ſeen. As the Daylight wore away, and the ſober Shades advanced; *Heſperus*, that leads the ſtarry Train, diſcloſed his radiant Forehead, and catched my Eye. While I ſtood gazing, on his bright and beautiful Aſpect, others peeped thro' the blue Curtains. Scarce had I turned to obſerve, theſe freſh Emanations of Splendor; but others dropt the Veil; others ſtole into View. When lo! faſter and more numerous, Multitudes ſprung from Obſcurity; they poured, in ſhining Troops, and in ſweet Confuſion, over all the cærulean Plain. Till the Firmament ſeemed, like one vaſt Conſtellation; and a Flood of Glory burſt from all the Skies.

Is not ſuch the *Riſe*, and ſuch the *Progreſs*, of a true *Converſion*; in the prejudiced Infidel, or inattentive Sinner? In the Period of his vainer Years, a thouſand *intereſting Truths*, lay utterly *undiſcovered*; a thouſand *momentous Concerns*, were intirely *diſregarded*. But, when divine Grace diſſipates the deluſive Glitter, which dazled

dazled his Underſtanding, or beguiled his Affections; then, He begins to diſcern, dimly to diſcern, the Things that belong to his Peace. Some powerful Admonition of Scripture, darts Conviction into his Mind; as the Rays of a Star, pierce the Gloom of Night. Then, perhaps, another awful or chearing Text, flings Terror, or diffuſes Comfort; a Threatning alarms his Fears, or a Promiſe awakens his Hopes. This, poſſibly, is ſucceeded by ſome very impreſſive Diſpenſation of Providence; or improved by ſome edifying, and inſtructive Converſation. All which is faſtened, as to it's Continuance; and enlarged, as to it's Influence; by a diligent Study of the ſacred Word. By this means, new Truths continually pour their Evidence; new Scenes of refined and exalted, but hitherto unknown Delight, addreſs Him with their Attractives. New Deſires take Wing; new Purſuits are ſet on Foot. A new Set of Tempers actuate his Heart; a new Habit of Converſation regulates his Life. Old Things are paſſed away; and "He, that was ſometime Darkneſs, is now "Light, and Life, and Joy in the LORD."

THE more attentively I view the cryſtal Concave, the greater *Number* of Luminaries I diſcern. Abundance of minuter Lights, that lay concealed from a *ſuperficial Notice*, are viſible on a *cloſer*

a *cloſer Examination.* Eſpecially in thoſe Tracts of the Sky, which are called the *Galaxy*; and are diſtinguiſhable, by a ſort of milky Path. There, they are crouded, rather than diſſeminated. The Region ſeems to be all on a Blaze, with their blended Rays. They ſhine thick as *Dew-drops*, on the Face of the *Morning*.—Beſides this vaſt Profuſion, which the prying Eye diſcovers; were I to make my Survey, from any other Part of the Globe, that lies nearer the Southern Pole; I ſhould behold a *new Choir* of ſtarry Bodies, which have never appeared in our *Hemiſphere*.—And were I, either *Here* or *There*, to view the Firmament with the *Virtuoſo's Glaſs*; I ſhould find a prodigious Multitude of flaming Orbs, that, immerſed in Depths of Æther, eſcape the keeneſt unaſſiſted Sight *.——And yet, in theſe various Situations; even with the Aid of the Teleſcopic Tube; I ſhould not be able to deſcry the Half, perhaps not a *Thouſandth Part*, of thoſe illuſtrious Bodies, which the vaſt expanſive Heavens

* Come forth, O Man, yon azure Round ſurvey,
And view thoſe Lamps, which yield eternal Day.
Bring forth thy Glaſſes: Clear thy wond'ring Eyes:
Millions beyond the former Millions riſe:
Look farther:—Millions more blaze from remoter Skies.

See an ingenious Poem, intituled, The Univerſe.

vens contain *.—So, the more diligently I purſue my Search, into thoſe Oracles of eternal Truth, the *Scriptures*; I perceive a wider, a deeper, an ever-increaſing *Fund* of *ſpiritual Treaſures*. I perceive the Diviner Strokes of Wiſdom, and the richer Diſplays of Goodneſs; the more tranſcendent Excellency of the Meſſiah, and a more deplorable Vileneſs in fallen Man; a more immaculate Purity in GOD's Law, and more precious Privileges in his Goſpel. And yet, after a Courſe of Study, ever ſo aſſiduous; ever ſo prolonged; I ſhould have Reaſon to own myſelf, a mere *Babe* in heavenly Knowledge; or, at moſt, but a *puerile* Proficient, in the *School* of CHRIST.

AFTER all my moſt accurate Inſpection, thoſe *ſtarry Orbs* appear but as *glittering Points*; and even the *Planets*, though ſo much nearer our earthly Manſion, ſeem not to exceed the Size of *flaming Bullets*. If then, we have ſuch *imperfect*

* How noble, conſidered in this View, are the Celebrations of the Divine Majeſty, which frequently occur in the ſacred Writings! *It is the LORD that made the Heavens.* Pſal. xcvi. 5.——What a prodigious Dignity, does ſuch a Senſe of Things give, to that devout Aſcription of Praiſe! *Thou, even Thou, art LORD alone; Thou haſt made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Hoſt.* Nehem. ix. 6. —And how inimitably ſublime is that beautiful Climax, in the inſpired Hymn! *Praiſe HIM, Sun and Moon: Praiſe Him, all ye Stars of Light: Praiſe Him, ye Heaven of Heavens.* Pſal. cxlviii. 3, 4.

imperfect Apprehenſions, of viſible and material Things; how much more ſcanty and inadequate, muſt be our Notions, of inviſible and immortal Objects!—We behold the Stars; and, though every one is incomparably *bigger*, than this whole Earth; yet they *dwindle*, upon our Survey, into the moſt diminutive Forms. Thus, we ſee by Faith the Glories of the bleſſed JESUS; the atoning Efficacy of his Death; the juſtifying Merit of his Righteouſneſs; and the Joys, which are reſerved for the Godly. But alas! even our moſt *exalted* Ideas, are vaſtly *below* the Truth: As much below the Truth; as the Report, which our Eyes make of thoſe celeſtial Edifices, is inferior to their real Grandeur.—Should we take in all the *magnifying* Aſſiſtances, which Art has contrived; thoſe luminous Bodies, would elude our Skill, and ſeem as *ſmall* as ever. Should an Inhabitant of Earth, travel towards the Cope of Heaven; and be carried forwards, in his aereal Journey, more than a hundred and ſixty Millions of Miles *; even in that *advanced* Situation, thoſe *Oceans*

* This, incredible as it may ſeem, is not a *mere Suppoſition*, but a *real Fact*. For, about the Tenth of *December*, we are above 160,000,000 of Miles nearer the Northern Parts of the Sky, than we were at the Tenth of *June*. And yet, with regard to the Stars ſituate in that Quarter, we perceive no *Change* in their *Aſpect*, nor any *Augmentation* of their *Magnitude*.

Oceans of *Flame*, would look no larger, than *radiant Specks*.——In like manner, conceive ever ſo magnificently, of the Redeemer's *Honours*; and of the *Bliſs*, which he has purchaſed for his People; yet, you will fall ſhort. Raiſe your Imagination *higher*; ſtretch your Invention *wider*; give them *all* the *Scope*, that a ſoaring and excurſive Fancy can take; ſtill, your Conceptions will be extremely *diſproportionate*, to their genuine Perfections.—Vaſt are the Bodies, which roll in the Expanſe of Heaven; vaſter far are thoſe Fields of Æther, through which they run their endleſs Round; but, the Excellency of JESUS, and the Happineſs laid up for his Servants, are greater than *either*; than *both*; than *all*. An inſpired Writer calls one, "The unſearchable Riches of CHRIST;" and ſtyles the other, "An exceeding "great and eternal Weight of Glory."

IF thoſe Stars, are ſo many inexhauſtible *Magazines* of *Fire*, and immenſe *Reſervoirs* of *Light*; there is no Reaſon to doubt, but they have ſome very *grand Uſes*, ſuitable to the Magnificence of their Nature. To ſpecify, or explain, the particular Purpoſes they anſwer; is altogether impoſſible, in our preſent State of Diſtance and Ignorance. This, however, we may clearly diſcern; that they are diſpoſed in ſuch a manner, as is moſt *pleaſing*, and *ſerviceable*, to Mankind.—They are not placed at

ſuch

ſuch an *infinite Remove*, as to lie beyond our Sight; neither are they brought *ſo near* our Abode, as to annoy us with their Beams. We ſee them ſhine on every Side; and the deep Azure, that ſerves them as a Ground, heightens their Splendor. But, their Influence is gentle, and their Rays are deſtitute of Heat. So that we are favoured with the View, of a Multitude of fiery Globes; without any Riſque, either to the *Coolneſs* of our *Night*, or the *Quiet* of our *Repoſe*.—Who can ſufficiently admire that immenſe Benignity; which, on our Account, *ſtrews* the *Earth* with Bleſſings of every Kind; and vouchſafes to make the *very Heavens*, ſubſervient to our Delight?

BUT, it is not ſolely to adorn the Roof of our Palace, with coſtly Gildings; that GOD commands the celeſtial Luminaries, to glitter through the Gloom. We alſo reap conſiderable Benefits, from their Miniſtry.——They *divide* our *Time*, and fix it's ſolemn Periods. They ſettle the *Order* of our *Works*; and are, according to the Deſtination mentioned in ſacred Writ, "for "Signs, and for Seaſons; for Days, and for "Years." The Returns of Heat and Cold alone, would have been too precarious a Rule. But theſe radiant Bodies; by the *Variation*, and alſo by the *Regularity* of their Motions; afford a Method of calculating, abſolutely certain, and ſufficiently

ſufficiently obvious. By this, the *Farmer* is inſtructed, when to commit his Grain to the Furrows, and how to conduct the Operations of Huſbandry. By this, the *Sailor* knows when to proceed on his Voyage, with leaſt Peril; and how to carry on the Buſineſs of Navigation, with moſt Succeſs.

WHY ſhould not the Chriſtian, the *Probationer* for *Eternity*, learn from the ſame Monitors, to *number*, for nobler Purpoſes, his *Days*; and duly to tranſact the grand, grand Affairs, of his final Salvation? Since GOD has appointed ſo many bright Meaſurers of our Time, to determine it's larger Periods, and to minute down it's ordinary Stages; ſure, *this* moſt ſtrongly inculcates it's *Value*, and ſhould powerfully prompt us to *improve* it.——Behold! the ſupreme Lord marks the Progreſs of our Life, in that moſt *conſpicuous Kalendar* above. And does not ſuch an Ordination tell us, in the moſt emphatical Language, That it is given for *Uſe*, not for *Waſte?* That no Portion of it is delivered, but under a ſtrict Account; that all of it is entered, as it paſſes, in the Divine Regiſter; and, therefore, that the Stewards of ſuch a Talent, are to expect a future Reckoning?—Behold! the very Heavens are bidden to be the *Accomptants*, of our Years, and Months, and Days. O! may this induce us to manage them, with a vigilant Frugality;

gality; to part with them, as Miſers with their *hoarded Treaſure*, warily and circumſpectly; and, if poſſible, as Merchants with their *rich Commodities*, not without their Equivalent, either in perſonal Improvement, or ſocial Uſefulneſs!

How *bright* the ſtarry Diamonds ſhine! The Ambition of Eaſtern Monarchs could imagine no Diſtinction, more noble and ſublime, than that of being likened to thoſe beaming Orbs *.—— They form Night's *richeſt Dreſs*; and ſparkle upon her ſable Robe, like Jewels of the fineſt Luſtre. Like Jewels! I wrong their Character. The lucid Stone has no Brilliancy; quenched is the Flame even of the golden Topaz; compared with thoſe glowing Decorations of Heaven.—— How *widely* are their radiant Honours *diffuſed!* No Nation ſo remote, but ſees their Beauty, and rejoices in their Uſefulneſs. They have been admired by all preceding Generations; and every riſing Age, will gaze on their Charms, with renewed Delight.—How *animating*, then, is that *Promiſe*, make to the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel! "They that turn many to Righteouſ-"neſs, ſhall ſhine as the Stars for ever and "ever †." Is not this a moſt winning Encouragement, "to ſpend and be ſpent," in the Service of Souls? Methinks, the Stars *beckon*, as

* Numb. xxiv. 17. Dan. viii. 10.
† Dan. xii. 3.

as they *twinkle*. Methinks, they ſhew me their Splendors, on purpoſe to awaken my *Alacrity*, in the *Race* ſet before me; on purpoſe to enliven my *Activity*, in the *Work* that is given me to do.—If Honour has any Charms; if true Glory, the Glory which cometh from GOD, is any Attractive; there cannot be a more powerful Incitement, to exerciſe all Aſſiduity in my holy Vocation. Therefore, when *Zeal* becomes *languid*; let me have Recourſe to theſe Lamps of Heaven; and *rekindle* its *Ardor*, at their inextinguiſhable Fires.

OF the *Polar Star*, it is obſerveable; that, while other Luminaries *alter* their Situation, this ſeems invariably *fixed* *. While other Luminaries, now, mount the Battlements of Heaven, and appear upon Duty; now, retire beneath the Horizon, and reſign, to a freſh Set, the Watches of the Night; this never departs from its Station. This, in every Seaſon, maintains an *uniform Poſition*; and is always to be found, in the ſame Tract of the northern Sky.—How often has *this* beamed bright Intelligence on the *Sailor*; and conducted the Keel, to it's deſired Haven! In

* I ſpeak in Conformity to the *Appearance* of the Object. For, though this remarkable Star revolves round the Pole, it's *Motion* is ſo *ſlow*, and the *Circle* it deſcribes ſo *ſmall*; as render both the Revolution, and Change of Situation, hardly perceivable.

early Ages, thoſe that went down to the Sea in Ships, and occupied their Buſineſs in great Waters, had ſcarce any other *ſure Guide* for their wandering Veſſel. This therefore they viewed, with the moſt ſolicitous Attention. By this, they formed their Obſervations, and regulated their Voyage. When this was obſcured by Clouds, or inveloped in Miſts; the trembling Mariner was *bewildered*, on the watery Waſte. His Thoughts fluctuated, as much as the floating Surge; and he knew not, *where* he was advanced, or *whither* he ſhould ſteer. But, when this auſpicious Star broke through the Gloom; it diſſipated the *Anxiety* of his Mind, and cleared up his *dubious Paſſage*. He re-aſſumed, with Alacrity, the Management of the Helm; and was able to ſhape his Courſe, with ſome tolerable Degree of Satisfaction and Certainty.

SUCH, only much *clearer* in it's *Light*, and much *ſurer* in it's *Direction*, is the *Holy Word* of GOD, to thoſe Myriads of intellectual Beings, who are bound for the eternal Shores: and, imbarked in a Veſſel of frail Fleſh, are to paſs the Waves of this perilous World. In all *Difficulties*, theſe ſacred Pages ſhed an *encouraging* Ray; in all *Uncertainties*, they ſuggeſt the *right Determination*, and point out a *proper Procedure*. And, what is ſtill a more ineſtimable Advantage, they, like

like the Star which conducted the Eaſtern Sages, make *plain* our Way to the *Redeemer*. They diſplay his unſpeakable Merits; diſcover the Method of being intereſted in his Atonement; and lead the weary Soul, toſſed by Troubles, and *ſhattered* by Temptations, to that only *Harbour* of peaceful Repoſe.—Let us, therefore, attend to this *unerring Directory*, with the ſame Conſtancy of Regard, as the Sea-faring Man obſerves his Compaſs. Let us become as thoroughly acquainted with this *ſacred Chart*, as the Pilot is with every truſty Mark, that gives notice of a lurking Rock; and with every open Road, that yields a ſafe Paſſage into the Port. Above all, let us *commit* ourſelves to this *infallible Guidance*, with the ſame implicit Reſignation; let us conform to it's Divine Precepts, with the ſame ſedulous Care; as the Children of *Iſrael*, when ſojourning in the trackleſs Deſert, followed the Pillar of Fire, and the Motions of the miraculous Cloud. —So, will it introduce us, not into an *earthly Canaan*, flowing with Milk and Honey; but into an *immortal Paradiſe*, where is the Fulneſs of Joy, and where are Pleaſures for evermore. It will introduce us into thoſe happy, happy Regions, where *our Sun ſhall no more go down, nor our Moon withdraw itſelf; for the LORD ſhall be our everlaſting Light, and the Days of our*

Mourning, together with the Fatigues of our Pilgrimage, *ſhall be ended* *.

I PERCEIVE a great *Variety*, in the Size and Splendor of thoſe Gems of Heaven. Some, are of the firſt Magnitude; others, of an inferior Order. Some *glow* with intenſe Flames; others *glimmer*, with fainter Beams. Yet, *all* are *beautiful*; all have their peculiar Luſtre, and diſtinct Uſe; all tend, in their different Degrees, to enamel the Cope of Heaven, and embroider the Robe of Night—This Circumſtance is remarked by an Author, whoſe Sentiments are a Source of Wiſdom, and the very Standard of Truth. "One "Star, ſays the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, *differeth* "from another Star in Glory: *So* alſo is the "Reſurrection of the Dead."

IN the World above, are various *Degrees* of Happineſs, various *Seats* of Honour. Some will riſe to more illuſtrious Diſtinctions, and richer Joys †. Some, like Veſſels of ample Capacity, will admit more copious Acceſſions of Light and Excellence. And yet, there will be no Want, *no Deficiency*, in any; but *a Fulneſs* both of Divine Satisfactions, and perſonal Perfection. *Each* will

* Iſa. lx. 20.

† 1 *Cor.* xv. 41, 42. The great Mr. *Mede prefers* the Senſe here given, and the learned Dr. *Hammond admits* it, into his Paraphraſe. Whoſe joint Authority, though far from excluding any *other*, yet is a ſufficient Warrant for *this* Application of the Words.

will enjoy *all* the Good; and be adorned with *all* the Glory; that his Heart can wiſh, or his Condition receive. — None will know what it is, to envy. Not the leaſt Malevolence; nor the leaſt Selfiſhneſs; but everlaſting Friendſhip prevails, and a mutual Complacency in each other's Delight. Love, *cordial Love*, will give every *particular* Saint, a *Participation* of all the Fruitions *; that are diffuſed through the whole Aſſembly of the Bleſſed.—None will *eclipſe*, but rather *reflect Light* upon, another. A ſweet Interchange of Rays ſubſiſts; all enlightened by the great Fountain, and all enlightening one another. By which reciprocal Communication of Pleaſure and Amity, each will be continually *receiving from*; each inceſſantly *adding to*; the general Felicity.

HAPPY, ſupremely happy they, who obtain the moſt humble Portion in the celeſtial Manſions. Better to be a *Door-keeper* in thoſe "Ivory Pa-"laces †," than to fill the moſt *gorgeous Throne* on Earth. The very loweſt Place at GOD's Right-hand, is diſtinguiſhed Honour, and conſummate Delight.— O! that we may anticipate ſomething of that bliſsful State, while we remain in our Baniſhment below! May we, *by rejoicing* in the ſuperior Proſperity of another, make it

* *Tolle Invidiam, & tuum eſt quod habeo: Tolle Invidiam, & meum eſt quod habes.* Auguſtine.

† Pſal. xlv. 8.

our own! And, provided the *general Reſult* is Harmony, be content, be pleaſed, with *whatſoever Part* is aſſigned to our Share, in the univerſal Choir of Affairs.

WHILE I am conſidering the heavenly Bodies, I muſt not intirely forget thoſe fundamental Laws of our modern Aſtronomy, *Projection*, and *Attraction*. One of which is the all-combining Cement, the other is the ever-operative Spring, of the mighty Frame.——In the Beginning, the all-creating FIAT impreſſed a proper Degree of Motion, on each of thoſe whirling Orbs. Which, if not controuled, would have carried them on, in ſtrait Lines, and to endleſs Lengths; till they were even loſt, in the Abyſs of Space. But, the *gravitating* Property being added to the *projectile* Force, determined their Courſes to a *circular* * Form; and obliged the reluctant

* I am aware, the planetary Orbits are not ſtrictly *circular*, but rather *elliptical*. However, as they are but a ſmall Remove from the perfectly rotund Figure; and partake of it incomparably more than the Trajectories of the Comets; I chooſe to repreſent the Thing in this View. Eſpecially, becauſe the Notion of a Circle, is ſo much more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than that of an Ellipſis: and becauſe I laid it down for a Rule, not to admit any ſuch *abſtruſe* Sentiment, or *barbarous* Expreſſion, as ſhould demand a *painful Attention*, inſtead of raiſing an

reluctant Rovers, to perform their deſtined Rounds. —— Were either of thoſe Cauſes to ſuſpend their Action, all the harmoniouſly moving Spheres would degenerate into *torpid Maſſes*; and, falling into the central Fire, be *burnt* to *Aſhes:* Or elſe, would exorbitate into *wild Confuſion*; and each, by the Rapidity of its Whirl, be *diſſipated* into *Atoms*. But, the impulſive, and attractive Energy, being moſt nicely attempered to each other; and, under the immediate Operation of the Almighty, exerting themſelves in perpetual Concert; the various Globes run their radiant Races, without the leaſt Interruption or Deviation. So as to create the alternate Changes, of *Day* and *Night*; and diſtribute the uſeful Viciſſitudes, of *ſucceeding Seaſons*. So as to anſwer all the great Ends of a gracious Providence; and procure every comfortable Convenience, for univerſal Nature.

DOES not this Conſtitution of the *material*, very naturally lead the Thoughts, to thoſe grand Principles of the *moral* and *devotional* World,

an *agreeable Idea*. For which Reaſon, I have avoided *technical Terms*; have taken no notice of *Jupiter's Satellites*, or *Saturn's Ring*; have not ſo much as mentioned the Names of the Planets, nor attempted to wade into any Depths of the Science; leſt, to thoſe that have had no Opportunity of uſing the *Teleſcope*, or of acquainting themſelves with a *Syſtem* of *Aſtronomy*, I ſhould propound *Riddles*, rather than *entertaining* and *edifying* Truths.

Faith and *Love?*—Theſe are often celebrated by the inſpired Apoſtle, as a comprehenſive Summary of the Goſpel *. Theſe inſpirit the Breaſt, and regulate the Progreſs, of each *private Chriſtian*. Theſe unite the *whole Congregation* of the Faithful to GOD, and one another: To GOD, the great Centre, in the Bonds of Gratitude and Duty; to one another, by a reciprocal Intercourſe of brotherly Affections, and friendly Offices.——If you aſk, Why it is impoſſible for the true Believer, to live at all Adventures? to *ſtagnate*, in a liſtleſs *Inactivity*; or to indulge the *extravagant Excurſions*, of lawleſs Inclination?—It is owing to "his Faith, working by Love †." He verily truſts, that CHRIST has ſuſtained the Infamy, and endured the Torment, due to his Sins. He firmly relies on that Divine Propitiation, for the Pardon of all his Guilt; and humbly expects everlaſting Salvation, as the Purchaſe of his Saviour's Merits. This produces ſuch a Set of grateful Sentiments, and ſuch a Spirit of unfeigned Thankfulneſs, as animate his whole Behaviour. He cannot, he cannot *run* to *Exceſs* of *Riot*; becauſe Love to his adorable Redeemer, like a ſtrong, but ſilken *Curb*, ſweetly *reſtrains* him. He cannot, he cannot lie *lulled* in a *lethargic Indolence*; becauſe Love to the ſame infinite

* Col. i. 4. Philem. ver. 5.
† Gal. v. 6.

nite Benefactor, like a pungent, but endearing *Spur*, pleaſingly *excites* him.—In a Word; Faith ſupplies the powerful Impulſe, while Love gives the determining Biaſs; and leads the willing Feet, through the whole Circle of GOD's Commandments. By the united Efficacy of theſe *heavenly Graces*, the Chriſtian Conduct is preſerved, in the Uniformity and Beauty of Holineſs; as by the blended Power of thoſe *Newtonian Principles*, the ſolar Syſtem revolves, in a ſteady and magnificent Regularity.

How admirable, how extenſive, how diverſified is the Force, of this ſingle Principle of *Attraction* * *!*—This penetrates the very Eſſence of all Bodies, and diffuſes itſelf to the remoteſt Limits of the mundane Syſtem.——By this, the vaſt Worlds of Matter hang *ſelf-balanced* on their Centres; and, though Orbs of immenſe Magnitude, require nothing, but this amazing Property, for their Support. To this we aſcribe a Phænomenon, of a very different Kind, the *Preſſure* of the Atmoſphere: which, though a yielding and expanſive Fluid; yet, conſtipated by an attractive Energy; ſurrounds the whole Globe, and incloſes every Creature, as it were with a tight Bandage. An Expedient this, abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the Texture of our Bodies; and

* I mean the Attraction both of *Gravitation*, and *Coheſion*.

and indeed, to maintain every Species of Animal Exiſtence.—Urged by this wonderful Impetus, the *Rivers* circulate, with a never-failing Current, along the Veins of the Earth; rolling, with torrent Rapture, down the Steeps, or ſoftly ebbing through the Plains. Impelled by the ſame myſterious Force, the *nutritious Juices* are detached from the Soil; and, aſcending the Trees, find their Way through Millions of the fineſt Meanders, in order to transfuſe vegetative Life into all the Branches.——This confines the *Ocean*, within proper Bounds: Though the Waves thereof roar; though they toſs themſelves, with all the Madneſs of indignant Rage; yet, checked by this potent, this inevitable Curb, they are unable to paſs even the ſlight Barrier of Sand. To this the *Mountains* owe that unſhaken Firmneſs, which laughs at the Shock of careering Winds; and bids the Tempeſt, with all its mingled Horrors, impotently rave.—By virtue of this inviſible Mechaniſm; without the Aid of Crane or Pulley, or any Inſtrument of human Device; many thouſand *Tons* of *Water* are *raiſed*, every Moment, into the Regions of the Firmament. By this, they continue *ſuſpended* in thin Air, without any capacious Ciſtern, to contain their Subſtance; or any maſſy Pillars, to ſuſtain their Weight. By this ſame variouſly acting Power, they

they *drop down* again in gentle Falls of Dew, or are *precipitated* in copious Showers of Rain; they *ſlide* into the Fields in fleecy Flights of Snow, or are *darted* upon the Houſes in clattering Storms of Hail.——This occaſions the ſtrong *Cohesion* of ſolid Bodies: without which, our large Machines could exert themſelves with no Vigour; and the nicer Utenſils of Life, would elude our Expectations of Service. This affords a Foundation, for all thoſe delicate or noble *mechanic Arts*; which furniſh Mankind with numberleſs Conveniencies, both of Ornament and Delight.——In ſhort; this is the prodigious *Ballaſt*, which compoſes the Æquilibrium, and conſtitutes the Stability of Things: this, the great *Chain*, which forms the Connections of univerſal Nature; and the mighty *Engine*, which prompts, facilitates, and, in good meaſure, accompliſhes almoſt all her Operations.—O! what *complicated* Effects, from a *ſingle* Cauſe*! What Profuſion, amidſt Frugality; an unknown Profuſion of Benefits, with the utmoſt Frugality of Expence!

AND what *is* this Attraction? Is it a Quality, in it's Exiſtence, inſeparable from *Matter*; and

* See another remarkable Inſtance of this Kind, in the *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*, pag. 173.—together with a fine Obſervation, quoted in the correſponding Note.

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and, in it's Acting, independent on the DEITY? ——Quite the reverſe. It is the very *Finger* of GOD: the conſtant Impreſſion of divine Power: a Principle, neither innate in Matter, nor intelligible by Mortals.—Does it not, however, bear a conſiderable Analogy to the *Agency* of the HOLY GHOST, in the Chriſtian Oeconomy? Are not the gracious Operations of the bleſſed Spirit, thus *extenſive*, thus *admirable*, thus *various?*—That almighty Being tranſmits his Gifts, through every Age; and communicates his Graces, to every Adherent on the Redeemer. All, either of illuſtrious Memory, or of beneficial Tendency; in a Word, "all the Good "that is done upon Earth, He doth it himſelf." Strong in *his* Aid, and in the Power of *his* Might, the Saints of all Times, have trod Vice under their Feet; have triumphed over this abject World; and converſed in Heaven, while they dwelt on Earth. *Not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me* *, is the unanimous Acknowledgment of them All.—By the ſame kindly Succours, the whole Church is ſtill enlightened, quickened, and governed. By his benign Influences, the Scales of *Ignorance*, fall from the Underſtanding; the Leproſy of *evil Concupiſcence*, is purged from the Will; and the Fetters,

* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

ters, the more than adamantine Fetters, of *habitual Iniquity*, drop off from the Converſation. He breathes even upon dry Bones *, and they live: they are animated with Faith; they pant with ardent Deſire; they exerciſe themſelves in all the Duties of Godlineſs.——His real, though ſecret, Inſpiration *diſſolves* the Flint in the impenitent Breaſt: and *binds* up the Sorrows of the broken Heart: *raiſes* the Thoughts high in the Elevations of holy Hope, yet *lays* them *low* in the Humiliations of inward Abaſement: *ſteels* the Soul with impenetrable Reſolution, and perſevering Fortitude; and, at the ſame Time, *ſoftens* it into a Dove-like Meekneſs, and *melts* it in penitential Sorrow.

WHEN I contemplate thoſe *ample* and amazing *Structures*, erected in endleſs Magnificence, over all the æthereal Plains:——When I look upon them, as ſo many ſplendid *Repoſitories* of *Light*, or fruitful *Abodes* of *Life*:——When I remember, that, in all Probability, there are Orbs vaſtly *more remote*, than thoſe which appear to our unaided Sight; Orbs, whoſe *Effulgence*, though travelling ever ſince the Creation, is *not* yet

* See that beautiful Piece of ſacred and allegorical Imagery diſplayed, *Ezek.* xxxvii.

yet *arrived* upon our Coaſts * :—When I ſtretch my Thoughts to the innumerable Orders of Being, which inhabit all thoſe ſpacious Syſtems; from the *loftieſt Seraph*, that ſurrounds the Throne; to the *puny Nations*, which tinge with Blue the Surface of the Plum †, or mantle the ſtanding

* If this Conjecture (which has no leſs a Perſon than the celebrated Mr. *Huygens* for it's Author) concerning *unſeen Stars*, be true; If, to this Obſervation be added, what is affirmed by our ſkilful Aſtronomers; that the *Motion* of the *Rays* of Light is ſo *ſuprizingly ſwift*, as to paſs through Ten Millions of Miles in a ſingle Minute—How *vaſt! beyond Imagination* vaſt and unmeaſurable, are the *Spaces* of this *Univerſe!*—While the Mind is diſtended with the *grand Idea*; or rather, while ſhe is diſpatching her ableſt Powers of piercing *Judgment*, and excurſive *Fancy*; and finds them all *drop ſhort*; all baffled by the amazing Subject: Permit me to apply that beautiful Exclamation, and noble Remark—

—Say, proud Arch,
Built with Divine Ambition; in Diſdain
Of Limit built; built in the Taſte of Heav'n!
Vaſt Concave! Ample Dome! Waſt thou deſign'd
A *meet Apartment* for the DEITY?
Not ſo: That Thought alone thy State impairs:
Thy *Lofty* ſinks; and ſhallows thy *Profound*;
And ſtraitens thy *Diffuſive*.

Night Thoughts, N° IX.

† Ev'n the *blue Down* the purple Plum ſurrounds,
A *living World*, thy failing Sight confounds.

To

ſtanding Pool with Green:——O! how various are the Links, in this immenſe Chain! How vaſt the Gradations, in this univerſal Scale of Exiſtence! Yet *all* theſe, however vaſt and various, are the *Work* of GOD's *Hand*, and are *full* of his *Preſence*.

HE rounded in his Palm thoſe dreadfully large Globes, which are pendulous in the Vault of Heaven. He kindled thoſe aſtoniſhingly bright Fires, which fill the Firmament with a Flood of Glory. By Him they are ſuſpended in *fluid* Æther, and cannot be *ſhaken*: By Him they diſpenſe a *perpetual* Tide of Beams, and are never *exhauſted*.——He formed, with inexpreſſible Nicety, that exquiſitely fine Collection of *Tubes*; that unknown Multiplicity of ſubtle *Springs*; which organize, and actuate, the Frame of the minuteſt Inſect. He bids the crimſon Current roll; the vital Movements play; and aſſociates a *World* of *Wonders*, even in an *animated Point* *.

—In

To HIM a peopled Habitation ſhews,
Where Millions taſte the Bounty GOD beſtows.

See a very beautiful, noble, and inſtructive Poem, ſtyled—DEITY.

* There are living Creatures, abundantly ſmaller than the Mite. Mr. *Bradley*, in his Treatiſe on Gardening, mentions *an Inſect*; which, after accurate Examination, he found to be a *Thouſand* times *leſs* than the *leaſt* viſible *Grain* of Sand. At the ſame time

—In all theſe, is a rich Exhibition of *creating Power*; to all theſe, are extended, the ſpecial Regards of *preſerving Goodneſs*. From hence, let me learn to rely on the Providence, and to be ever ſenſible of the Preſence, of the ſupreme Majeſty.

To *rely* on his *Providence*.—For, not *one* Being; amidſt that *inconceivable Number* and Variety, which ſwarm through the Regions of Creation; is overlooked, or neglected, by the great omnipotent Cauſe of all. However inconſiderable in it's Character, or diminutive in it's Size, it is ſtill the Production of the univerſal Maker, and belongs to the Family of the Almighty Father.——What? Though inthroned Archangels,

time declaring, that ſuch an *Animalcule*, though quite imperceptible to the naked Eye, is a *bulky Being*; compared with others, almoſt infinitely more minute, diſcovered by Mr. *Lewenhoeck*.—If then we conſider the *ſeveral Limbs*, which compoſe (If I may be allowed the Expreſſion) ſuch an organized Particle: The *different Springs*, which actuate ſuch a Set of Limbs: The *Flow* of *Spirits*, inexpreſſibly more attenuated, which put thoſe Springs in Motion: The various *Fluids*, that circulate: The different *Secretions*, that are performed: Together with the proportionable Minuteneſs of the *Solids*, before they arrive at their *full Growth*: Not to mention other *more aſtoniſhing* Modes of Diminution:—Sure, we ſhall ſee the utmoſt Reaſon to acknowledge, that the adored Maker is—MAXIMUS IN MINIMIS; *greatly glorious* even in his *ſmalleſt* Works.

Archangels, enjoy the *Smiles* of his *Countenance*; yet, the low Inhabitants of Earth, the moſt deſpicable Worms that creep the Ground, are not excluded from his kind *providential Cares*. Though the Manifeſtation of his Perfections, is vouchſafed to holy and intellectual Eſſences; his Ear is open, to the Cries of the young Raven; his Eye attentive to the Wants, and to the Welfare, of the very meaneſt Births of Nature. —How much leſs then, are his *own People* diſregarded? *Thoſe*, for whom He has delivered his beloved Son to Death, and for whom He has prepared Habitations of eternal Joy. *They* diſregarded! No: THEY are "kept as the Apple "of an Eye;" the very Hairs of their Head are all numbered; and the fondeſt Mother may *forget* the *Infant*, that is "dandled upon her Knees," and ſucks at her Breaſt *; much ſooner than the Father of everlaſting Compaſſions can *diſcontinue*, or

* Iſai. xlix. 15. *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee.*——How delicate, and very expreſſive, are the Images, in this charming Scripture? How full of *Beauty*, if beheld in a *critical*, how rich with *Conſolation*, if conſidered in a *believing*, View?—Can a *Woman*; one of the ſofter Sex, whoſe Nature is moſt impreſſible, and whoſe Paſſions are remarkably tender—Can ſuch a one, not barely diſregard, but intirely *forget*; not ſuſpend her Care for a while,

or *remit*, his watchful Tenderneſs to thoſe, whom He condeſcends to call, not Servants only, but *Children*.

LET this teach me alſo a more lively *Senſe* of the *Divine Preſence*.——All the *rolling Worlds* above; all the *living Atoms* below; together with all

but utterly eraſe the very Memory of—*Her Child*; her own Child, not another's; a Child, that was formed in her *Womb*, and is a Part of herſelf?—— Her *Son*; the more important, and therefore more deſirable Species; to whom it peculiarly belongs, to preſerve the Name, and build up the Family—— Her *only* Son; for the Word is ſingular, and refers to a Caſe, where the Offſpring, not being numerous, but centred in a ſingle Birth, muſt be productive of the fondeſt Endearment—Can ſhe diveſt herſelf of all Concern for ſuch a Child; not when he is grown up to Maturity, or gone abroad from her Houſe; but, while he continues in an infantile State, and muſt owe his whole Safety to her kind Attendance; while he lies in her Boſom, reſts on her Arm, and even *ſucks* at her Breaſt?—Eſpecially, if the poor Innocent be racked with Pain, or ſeized by ſome ſevere Affliction; and ſo become an Object of *Compaſſion*, as well as of Love. Can ſhe hear it's piercing Cries; can ſhe ſee it all reſtleſs, all helpleſs under it's Miſery; and feel no Emotions of parental Pity? ——Or, if *one* ſuch Monſter of Inhumanity might be found; yet, can *all* Mothers be ſo degenerate? This, ſure, need never be feared. Much leſs need the *true Believer*, be apprehenſive of the *Failure* of *my Kindneſs*. An *univerſal* Extinction, of theſe *ſtrongeſt* Affections of Nature, is a more ſuppoſable Caſe; than that I ſhould ever be unmindful of my People, or regardleſs of their Intereſts.

all the Beings that *intervene*, betwixt theſe wide Extremes; are *Vouchers* for an ever-preſent Deity. "GOD has not left Himſelf without Witneſs." There are the Marks of his Footſteps in every Place, and the Touches of his Finger in every Creature. "*Thy Name is ſo nigh*, O Thou all-"ſupporting, all-informing LORD, *and that* "*do thy wondrous Works declare.* Thy Goodneſs "*warms* in the Morning Sun, and *refreſhes* in "the Evening Breeze. Thy Glory *ſhines* in the "Lamps of Midnight, and *ſmiles* in the Bloſſoms "of Spring. We ſee a *Trace* of thy incompre-"henſible Grandeur, in the *boundleſs* Extent of "Things; and a *Sketch* of thy exquiſite Skill, in "thoſe almoſt *evaneſcent* Sparks of Life, the "inſect Race."—O! How ſtupid is this Heart of mine, that, amidſt ſuch a Multitude of Remembrancers, thronging on every Side, I ſhould forget Thee a ſingle Moment! Grant me, Thou great I AM; Thou Source, and Support, of univerſal Exiſtence;—O! grant me an enlightened Eye, to *diſcern* Thee in every Object; and a devout Heart, to *adore* Thee on every Occaſion. Inſtead of living without GOD in the World; may I be ever with Him, and ſee all Things full of Him *!

IF

* ———The glittering Stars,
By the deep Ear of Meditation heard,
Still in their Midnight Watches ſing of HIM.

IF the beautiful Spangles, which a clear Night pours on the Beholder's Eye: if thoſe other Fires, which beam in remoter Skies; and are diſcoverable only by, that Revelation to the Sight, the Teleſcope: if all thoſe *bright Millions*, are ſo many Fountains of Day; enriched with native and independent Luſtre; illuminating Planets, and enlivening Syſtems, of their own *; O! What amazing Pomp is diſcloſed, in the Midnight Scene? What *unknown Riches* are diſſeminated through all theſe numberleſs Provinces, of the great JEHOVAH's Empire?—Yet, immenſe and endleſs as they are, there's not the *meaneſt Slave*, but carries incomparably *greater Wealth* in his own Boſom,

He nods a Calm. The Tempeſt blows his Wrath.
The Thunder is his Voice; and the red Flaſh
His ſpeedy Sword of Juſtice. At his Touch
The Mountains flame. He ſhakes the ſolid Earth,
And rocks the Nations. Nor in theſe alone,
In *every common Inſtance* GOD is ſeen.

THOMSON's *Spring*.

* Conſult with *Reaſon*. Reaſon will reply,
Each *lucid Point* which glows in yonder Sky,
Informs a *Syſtem* in the boundleſs Space,
And fills, with Glory, it's appointed Place:
With Beams unborrow'd, brightens other Skies;
And *Worlds*, to Thee unknown, with Heat and Life ſupplies.

The Univerſe.

Boſom. The *Soul*, that informs his Clay,—the Soul, that teaches him to think, and enables him to chooſe; that qualifies him to reliſh rational Pleaſure, and to breathe ſublime Deſire * ;—the Soul, that is poſſeſſed of ſuch noble Faculties; and, above all, is endued with the *dreadful*, the *glorious* Capacity, of being pained, or bleſſed, for ever—this Soul ſurpaſſes in Worth, whatever the Eye can ſee; whatever, of material, the Fancy can imagine. Before one ſuch intellectual Being, all the moſt aſtoniſhing *Magnificence* of unintelligent Creation, becomes poor and *contemptible* †. For this, Omnipotence itſelf has waked, and worked, through every Age. To *convince* this Soul, the fundamental Laws of Nature have been controuled; and the moſt amazing Miracles, have alarmed all the Ends of the Earth. To *inſtruct* this Soul, the Wiſdom of Heaven has been

 transfuſed

* In *this* reſpect, as veſted with ſuch Capacities, the Soul even of *fallen* Man, has an unqueſtionable Greatneſs and Dignity; is *majeſtic*, *tho' in Ruin*.

† I beg Leave to tranſcribe a pertinent Paſſage, from that celebrated Maſter of Reaſon, and univerſal Literature, Dr. *Bentley*; whom no one can be tempted to ſuſpect, either tinctured with Enthuſiaſm, or warped to Bigotry.—" If we conſider, ſays he, the " Dignity of an intelligent Being, and put that in " the Scale againſt brute and inanimate Matter, we " may affirm, without overvaluing human Nature, " that the Soul of one virtuous and religious Man is " of greater Worth and Excellency, than the Sun, " and his Planets, and all the Stars in the World."

See his Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lect. N° 8.

transfuſed into the ſacred Page; and Miſſionaries have been ſent from the great King, who reſides in Light unapproachable. To *ſanctify* this Soul, the Almighty Comforter takes the Wings of a Dove; and, with a ſweet transforming Influence, broods on the human Heart. And O! to *redeem* this Soul from Guilt; to reſcue it from Hell; the Heaven of Heavens was bowed, and GOD himſelf came down to dwell in Duſt.

LET me pauſe, a Moment, upon this important Subject.—What are the Schemes, which engage the Attention of eminent Stateſmen, and mighty Monarchs, compared with the *grand Intereſts* of an immortal Soul? The *Support* of *Commerce*, and the *Succeſs* of *Armies*, though extremely weighty Affairs; yet, if laid in the Balance againſt the Salvation of a Soul, are lighter than the downy Feather, poiſed againſt Talents of Gold. To ſave a *Navy* from *Shipwreck*, or a *Kingdom* from *Slavery*, are Deliverances of the moſt momentous Nature, that the Tranſactions of Mortality can admit. But O! how they ſhrink into an inconſiderable Trifle, if (their Aſpect upon Immortality forgot) they are ſet in Competition with the *Delivery* of a *ſingle* Soul, from the Anguiſh and Horrors of a *diſtreſſed Eternity* * *!*

SINCE,

* Not all yon Luminaries quench'd at once
Were half ſo ſad, as one benighted Mind,
Which gropes for Happineſs, and meets Deſpair.
Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

SINCE, ſuch is the Soul's Importance; what *Vigilance* can be *too much*; or rather what holy *Solicitude* can be *ſufficient*; for the Overſeers of the Saviour's Flock, and the Guardians of this unutterably noble Charge?——Since, ſuch is the Importance of the Soul; wilt thou not, O Man, be watchful for the Preſervation of thy own? Shall every *caſual* Incident, awaken thy Concern; every *tranſitory* Toy, command thy Regard? And ſhall the Welfare of thy Soul, a Work of *continual* Occurrence; a Work of *endleſs* Conſequence; ſue, in vain, for thy ſerious Care?—Thy Soul, thy Soul, is thy All. If this be *ſecured*, thou art greatly rich, and wilt be unſpeakably happy. If this be *loſt*, a whole World acquired, will leave thee in Poverty; and all it's Delights enjoyed, will abandon thee to Miſery.

I HAVE often been *charmed*, and *awed*, at the Sight of the nocturnal Heavens; even before I knew how to conſider them, in their proper Circumſtances of Majeſty and Beauty. *Something*, like *Magic*, has ſtruck my Mind, on a tranſient and unthinking Survey of the æthereal Vault when tinged throughout with the pureſt Azure, and decorated with innumerable ſtarry Lamps. I have felt, I know not what, powerful and aggrandizing Impulſe; that ſnatched me from the

low Intanglements of Vanity, and prompted an ardent Sigh for *ſublimer Objects*. Methought, I heard, even from the ſilent Spheres, a commanding Call, to ſpurn the abject Earth, and pant after unſeen Delighrs.——Henceforward, I hope to imbibe more copiouſly this *moral Emanation* of the Skies; when, in ſome ſuch Manner as the preceding, they are rationally ſeen, and duly weighed. The Stars, I truſt, will *teach*, as well as *ſhine*; and help to diſpel, both Nature's Gloom, and my intellectual Darkneſs. To Some, they diſcharge no higher a Service, than that of holding a *Flambeau* to their *Feet*, and ſoftening the Horrors of their Night. To me, may they be Miniſters of a ſuperior Order; and act as *Counſellors* of *Wiſdom*, and *Guides* to *Happineſs*. Nor will they fail to execute this noble Office, if they gently and gradually light my Way, into the Knowledge of their adored Maker; and point out, with their ſilver Rays, my Path to his beatific Preſence.

I GAZE, I ponder. I ponder, I gaze; and think ineffable Things.—I roll an Eye of Awe and Admiration. Again and again I repeat my raviſhed Views; and can never ſatiate my Sight, in this immenſe Theatre. I ſpring my Thought, in Speculation, till even Fancy tires upon her Wing. I find Wonders, *ever new*; Wonders, more

more and *more amazing*.—Yet, after all my preſent Inquiries, what a mere *Nothing* do I *know*; by all my future Searches, how *little* ſhall I be able to *learn*; of thoſe vaſtly diſtant Suns, and their circling Retinue of Worlds? Could I pry with *Newton*'s piercing Sagacity, or launch into his moſt extenſive Surveys: yet, even then, my Apprehenſions would be little better, than thoſe dim and ſcanty Images, which the *Mole*, juſt emerged from her Cavern, receives on her feeble Optic.—This, ſure, ſhould repreſs all immoderate Thirſt, after an *Inſight* into the *Secrets*, of the ſtarry Structures; and make me more careful, to *cultivate* my *Heart*. To fathom the Depths of the Divine Eſſence; or to ſcan univerſal Nature, with a critical Exactneſs; is an Attempt, that ſets the *acuteſt Philoſopher*, very nearly on a Level with *the Idiot*. Since it is almoſt, if not altogether, as impracticable by the One, as by the Other.

BE it, then, my chief Study, not to purſue, what is abſolutely unattainable; but rather to ſeek, what is obvious to find; eaſy to be acquired; and of ineſtimable Advantage, when poſſeſſed. O! let me ſeek *that Charity*, which edifieth *; *that Faith*, which purifieth. Love, humble

* 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. I need not inform my Reader, that in this Text; in that admirable Chapter 1 *Cor.* xiii. and in various other Paſſages of Scripture; the Word *Charity*, is by no means to be confined, to the

humble Love, and not *conceited Science*, keeps the Door of Heaven. Faith, a child-like Faith in JESUS; and not the *haughty ſelf-ſufficient Spirit*, which ſcorns to be ignorant of any Thing; preſents a Key * to thoſe Abodes of Bliſs.—This preſent State, is the Scene deſtined to the *Exerciſe* of *Devotion*; the inviſible World, is the Place appointed for the *Enjoyment* of *Knowledge* †. There, the Dawn of our infantile Minds, will be advanced to the Maturity of perfect Day; or rather, there our midnight Shades, will be brightened into all the Luſtre of Noon. There, the Souls that come from the *School* of Faith, and bring with them the *Principles* of Love, will dwell in Light itſelf; will be obſcured with no Darkneſs at

the particular Act of *Alms-giving*, or external Beneficence. It is of a much more exalted and extenſive Nature. It ſignifies that noble and divine Grace, which *warms* the Soul with a *ſupreme Love*, to GOD; and *inlarges* it with a *diſintereſted Affection*, for Men. Which renders it the reigning Care of the Life, and chief Delight of the Heart, to promote the *Glory* of the *ONE*, and the *Happineſs* of the *Other*.—*This, this*, is that Charity, of which ſo many *excellent Things* are every-where ſpoken: Which can never be too highly extolled, or too earneſtly coveted, ſince it is the *Image* of GOD, and the very *Spirit* of *Heaven*.

* By *Milton* beautifully ſtiled,

——The golden Key,
That opes the Palace of Eternity.

MILT. *Comus*.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

at all; will know even as they are known.—Such an Acquaintance, therefore, do I deſire to form, and to carry on ſuch a Correſpondence, with the heavenly Bodies; as may ſhed a benign Influence on the Seeds of Grace, implanted in my Breaſt. Let the exalted Tracts of the Firmament, ſink my Soul into *deep Humiliation*. Let thoſe eternal Fires, kindle in my Heart an *adoring Gratitude*, to their Almighty Sovereign. Let yonder ponderous and enormous Globes, which reſt on his ſupporting Arm; teach me an *unſhaken Affiance*, in their incarnate Maker. And I ſhall be—if not wiſe as the Aſtronomical Adept, yet WISE UNTO SALVATION.

HAVING now walked, and worſhiped, in this *univerſal Temple*, that is *arched* with Skies; *emblazed* with Stars; and *extended* even to Immenſity——Having caſt an Eye, like the inraptured Patriarch *; an Eye of *Reaſon* and *Devotion*, through the magnificent Scene: with the one, having diſcovered an *Infinitude* of *Worlds*; and with the other, met the *Deity* in every View—Having beheld, as *Moſes* in the flaming Buſh, a *Glimpſe* of JEHOVAH's Excellencies! *reflected* from the Planets, and *ſtreaming* from Myriads of celeſtial Luminaries—Having read *various Leſſons*, in that ſtupendous *Book* of *Wiſdom*, where

* Gen. xv. 5.

where unmeaſurable Sheets of Azure compoſe the Page; and Orbs of Radiance write, in everlaſting Characters, a *Comment* on our *Creed*—— What remains, but that I cloſe the *midnight Solemnity*, as our LORD concluded his grand Sacramental Inſtitution, with a *Song* of *Praiſe?*—— And behold a Hymn, ſuited to the ſublime occaſion; indited by * Inſpiration itſelf; transferred into our Language, by † one of the higheſt and happieſt Efforts of human Ingenuity.

The ſpacious Firmament on high,
With all the blue æthereal Sky,
And ſpangled Heav'ns, a ſhining Frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unweary'd Sun, from Day to Day,
Does his Creator's Pow'r diſplay,
And publiſhes, to ev'ry Land,
The Work of an Almighty Hand.

Soon as the Ev'ning Shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wond'rous Tale,
And nightly, to the liſt'ning Earth,
Repeats the Story of her Birth:
While all the Stars, that round her burn,
And all the Planets in their Turn,
Confirm the Tidings as they roll,
And ſpread the Truth from Pole to Pole.

What

* Pſal. xix.
† Addiſon, *Spect.* Vol. VI. N° 465.

What though, in ſolemn Silence, all
Move round the dark terreſtrial Ball?
What though, nor real Voice nor Sound
Amid their radiant Orbs be found?
In Reaſon's Ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious Voice,
For ever ſinging, as they ſhine,
The Hand, that mads Us, is divine.

A

WINTER-PIECE.

Storms and Tempeſts may calm *the Soul*
——Snow and Ice be taught to warm
the Heart, and praiſe the Creator.
Anonym. Lett. to the Author. See p. 260.

THE

CONTENTS.

INtroduction——Shortneſs of the Winter's Day——Inceſſant Rain, producing a Flood——Tempeſt; it's Effects; at Land, by Sea——Pitchy Darkneſs; riding in it——Thick Rime——Keen Froſt, and Serenity of Weather——Severe Cold, and piercing Winds——Deep Snow——General Thaw——Ever-Greens——Storm of Hail——Rainbow.

A

WINTER-PIECE.

'TIS true, in the delightful Seaſons, HIS Tenderneſs, and HIS Love, are moſt eminently diſplayed.—— In the *vernal* Months, all is Beauty to the Eye, and Muſic to the Ear. The Clouds drop Fatneſs; the Air ſoftens into Balm; and Flowers, in rich Abundance, ſpring where-ever we tread, bloom where-ever we look.——Amidſt the burning Heats of *Summer*, HE expands the Leaves, and thickens the Shades: He ſpreads the cooling Arbour, to receive Us; and awakes the gentle Breeze, to fan Us: the Moſs ſwells into a Couch, for the Repoſe of our Bodies; while the Rivulet ſoftly rolls, and ſweetly murmurs, to ſooth our Imagination.——In *Autumn*, HIS Bounty covers the Fields, with a Profuſion of yellow Treaſure; and bends the Boughs, with Loads of delicious

Fruit. He furniſhes the hoſpitable Table with preſent Plenty, and prepares a copious Magazine for future Wants.——But, is it only in theſe ſmiling Periods of the Year, that GOD, the all-gracious GOD, is ſeen? Has *Winter* no Tokens of his Preſence? Is not Winter eloquent of his Praiſe? Yes: "his Way is in "the Whirlwind." Storms and Tempeſts fulfil his Word, and extol his Power. Even piercing Froſts, bear Witneſs to his Goodneſs; while they bid the ſhivering Nations, tremble at his Wrath.——Be Winter then, for a while, our Theme *. Perhaps, thoſe *barren* Scenes, may be *fruitful* of intellectual Improvement. Perhaps, that chilling Cold, which binds the Earth in icy Chains; may ſerve to enlarge our Hearts, and warm them with holy Love.

SEE! how the *Day* is *ſhortened!* —— The Sun, detained in fairer Climes, or engaged in more agreeable

* A Sketch of this Nature, I muſt acknowledge, is quite different from the Subject of the Book; and, I cannot but declare, was as far diſtant from the Thoughts of the Author. But, the Deſire of *ſeveral* Acquaintance, together with an Intimation of its Uſefulneſs, by a very *polite Letter* from an *unknown* Hand, (which has *undeſignedly* furniſhed me with the beſt Motto, I could recollect) prevailed with me to add a few deſcriptive Touches, and improving Hints, on what is ſo often experienced in theſe northern Regions. I hope, the Attempt I have made to oblige theſe Gentlemen, will obtain the *Approbation*, or, at leaſt, the *Excuſe*, of my other Readers.

agreeable Services, riſes, like an unwilling Viſitant, with tardy and reluctant Steps. He walks, with a ſhy Indifference, along the Edges of the ſouthern Sky; caſting an oblique Glance, He juſt looks upon our dejected World; and ſcarcely ſcatters Light, through the thick Air. Dim is his Appearance, languid are his Gleams, while He continues. Or, if He chance to wear a brighter Aſpect, and a cloudleſs Brow; yet, like the Young and Gay in the Houſe of Mourning, He ſeems uneaſy, till He is gone; is in Haſte to depart. —And let Him depart. Why ſhould we wiſh for his longer Stay; ſince He can ſhew Us nothing, but Spectacles of Woe? The flowery World lies dead, and the tuneful Tribes are ſtruck dumb. The Trees, ſtript of their Verdure, and laſhed by Storms, ſpread their naked Arms to the enraged and relentleſs Heavens. Fragrance no longer floats in the Air, but chilling Damps hover, or cutting Gales blow. Nature, diveſted of all her beautiful Robes, ſits, like a forlorn diſconſolate Widow, in her Weeds. While Winds, in doleful Accents, howl; and Rains, in repeated Showers, weep.

WE regret not, therefore, the ſpeedy Departure of the Day. When the Room is hung with *funeral Black*, and diſmal Objects are all around; who would wiſh to have the *glimmering Taper* kept alive: which can only diſcover Scenes of Sorrow; only make the Horror viſible?

—— And, ſince this mortal Life is little better than a continual Conflict with Sin, or an unremitted Struggle with Miſery; is it not a *gracious* Ordination, which has reduced our Age to a *Span?* Fourſcore Years of Trial, for the Virtuous, are ſufficiently long; and more than ſuch a Term, allowed to the Wicked, would render them beyond all Meaſure vile. Our Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, lies through Tribulations; ſhall we then accuſe, ſhall we not rather bleſs, the Providence, which has made the Paſſage ſhort? Soon, ſoon we croſs the Vale of Tears; and then arrive on the happy Hills, where Light for ever ſhines, where Joy for ever ſmiles.

SOMETIMES, the Day is rendered ſhorter ſtill; is almoſt blotted out from the Year. The Vapours gather; they thicken into an impenetrable Gloom; and obſcure the Face of the Sky. At length, the *Rains* deſcend; the Sluices of the Firmament are opened; and the low-hung Clouds pour their congregated Stores. Copious and un-intermitted, ſtill they pour; and ſtill are un-exhauſted. The Waters drop inceſſantly from the Eaves, and ruſh in rapid Streams from the Spouts. They roar along the chanel'd Pavements, and ſtand in foul Shallows amidſt the Village Streets. Now, if the inattentive Eye, or negligent Hand, has left the Roof but ſcantily

ſcantily covered; the inſinuating Element finds its way into every Flaw, and oozing through the Cieling, at once upbraids and chaſtiſes the careleſs Inhabitant. The Ploughman, ſoaked to the Skin, leaves his half-tilled Acre. The poor Poultry, dripping with Wet, croud into Shelter. The Tenants of the Bough fold up their Wings, afraid to launch into the ſtreaming Air. The Beaſts, joyleſs and diſpirited, ruminate under their Sheds. The Roads ſwim, and the Brooks ſwell.—The *River*, amidſt all this watery Ferment, long contained itſelf within it's appointed Bounds. But, ſwollen by innumerable Currents; and rouſed, at laſt, into uncontroulable Rage; burſts over it's Banks; ſhoots into the Plain; bears down all Oppoſition; ſpreads itſelf far and wide; and buries the Meadow under a brown, ſluggiſh, ſoaking *Deluge*.

How fortunate for Man, that this Inundation comes, when there are no flowery Crops in the Valley, to be overwhelmed; no Fields ſtanding thick with Corn, to be laid waſte! At *ſuch* a Juncture, it would have been *Ruin*, to the Huſbandman and his Family: but, *thus* timed, it yields *Manure* for his Ground, and promiſes Him *Riches* in Reverſion.——How often, and how long, has the divine Majeſty bore with the moſt injurious Affronts from Sinners! His Goodneſs triumphed over their Perverſeneſs, and

graciouſly refuſed to be exaſperated. But Oh! preſumptuous Creatures, multiply no longer your Provocations. Urge not, by repeated Iniquities, the Almighty Arm to ſtrike; leſt his Long-ſuffering ceaſe, and his fierce Anger break forth; break forth, like a *Flood of Waters* *, and ſweep you away, into irrecoverable and everlaſting Perdition.

How mighty! how majeſtic! and O, how myſterious, are thy Works, thou GOD of Heaven, and LORD of Nature! When the Air is calm, where ſleep the *ſtormy Winds?* In what Chambers are they repoſed, or in what Dungeons confined? Till Thou art pleaſed to awaken their Rage, and throw open their Priſon Doors: Then, with irreſiſtible Impetuoſity they fly forth, ſcattering Dread, and menacing Deſtruction.

THE whole Atmoſphere is hurled into the moſt tumultuous Confuſion. The aereal Torrent burſts its Way over Mountains, Seas, and Continents. All Things feel the dreadful Shock. All Things tremble before the furious Blaſt. The *Foreſt*, vexed and tore, groans under the Scourge: her ſturdy Sons are ſtrained to the very Root, and almoſt kiſs the Soil, they were wont to ſhade. The ſtubborn Oak, that diſdains to bend, is daſhed headlong to the Ground; and, with ſhattered Arms, with proſtrate Trunk, blocks the Road.—While the flexile Reed, that ſprings

* Hoſ. v. 10.

ſprings up in the Marſh, yielding to the Guſt (as the *meek* and pliant Temper, to Injuries; or the *reſigned* and patient Spirit, to Misfortunes); eludes the Force of the Storm, and ſurvives amidſt the wide-ſpread Havock.

FOR a Moment, the turbulent and outrageous Sky ſeems to be aſſwaged: but, it intermits it's Wrath, only to increaſe it's Strength. Soon, the ſounding Squadrons of the Air return to the Attack, and renew their Ravages with redoubled Fury. The ſtately Dome rocks, amidſt the wheeling Clouds. The impregnable Tower totters on its Baſis; and threatens to overwhelm, whom it was intended to protect. The ragged Rock is rent in Pieces *; and even the Hills, the perpetual Hills, on their deep Foundations, are ſcarcely ſecure.—Where, now, is the Place of Safety? When the *City* reels, and Houſes become Heaps! Sleep affrighted flies. Diverſion is turned into Horror. All is Uproar in the Element; all is Conſternation among Mortals; and nothing, but one wide Scene of rueful Devaſtation, through the Land.— Yet, this is only an inferior Miniſter of divine Diſpleaſure. The Executioner of milder Indignation. How then— O, how will the lofty Looks of Man be humbled, and the Haughtineſs of Men be bowed down †; when

* 1 Kings xix. 11.

† ——— Mortalia Corda
Per Gentes humilis ſtravit Pavor.——

One

when the LORD GOD omnipotent ſhall *meditate* Terror—when He ſhall ſet *all* his Terrors in Array—when He ariſes, to judge the Nations, and to *ſhake terribly* the Earth!

THE *Ocean* ſwells with tremendous Commotions. The ponderous Waves are heaved from their capacious Bed, and almoſt lay bare the unfathomable Deep. Flung into the moſt rapid Agitation, they ſweep over the Rocks; they laſh the lofty Cliffs; and toſs themſelves into the Clouds. Navies are rent from their Anchors; and, with all their enormous Load, are whirled, ſwift as the Arrow, wild as the Winds, along the vaſt Abyſs. Now, they climb the rolling Mountain, they plough the frightful Ridge, and ſeem to ſkim the Skies: anon, they plunge into the opening Gulph, they loſe the Sight of Day, and are loſt themſelves to every Eye.

One would almoſt imagine, that *Virgil* had read *Iſaiah*, and borrowed his Ideas from Chap. ii. verſ. 11. The *humilis*, and *ſtravit*, of the One, ſo exactly correſpond with the—*humbled*—*bowed down*—of the other. But, in once Circumſtance, the Poet is vaſtly inferior to the Prophet. The latter, by giving a very ſtriking *Contraſt* to his Sentiments, repreſents them with incomparably greater Energy. He ſays not, *Men* in the groſs, or the *human Heart* in general: but Men of the moſt *elated* Looks; Hearts big with the moſt *arrogant* Imaginations; even *Haughtineſs* itſelf; ſhall *ſtoop* from their ſupercilious Heights, ſhall *grovel* in the loweſt Duſt of Abaſement, and *ſhudder* with the Extremes of an abject Puſillanimity.

Eye. How vain is the Pilot's Art! How impotent the Mariner's Strength! They reel to and fro, and ſtagger in the jarring Hold; or cling to the Cordage, while burſting Seas foam over the Deck. Deſpair is in every Face, and Death ſits threatening on every Surge.——But why, O ye aſtoniſhed Mariners, why ſhould you abandon yourſelves to Deſpair? Is the LORD's Hand ſhortened, becauſe the Waves of the Sea rage horribly? Is his Ear deafened, by the roaring Thunders, and the bellowing Tempeſt? Cry, Cry, unto HIM, who "holdeth the Winds in his Fiſt, and the Waters in "the Hollow of his Hand." HE is all-gracious, to hear; and almighty, to ſave. If HE command, the Storm ſhall be huſhed to Silence: the Billows ſhall ſubſide into a Calm: the Lightnings ſhall lay their fiery Bolts aſide: and, inſtead of ſinking in a watery Grave, you ſhall find Yourſelves brought to the deſired Haven.

SOMETIMES, after a joyleſs Day, a more melancholy *Night* ſucceeds.—The lazy, louring Vapours had wove ſo thick a Veil, as the meridian Sun could ſcarcely penetrate. What Gloom then muſt overwhelm the nocturnal Hours? The Moon withdraws her Shining. Not a ſingle Star, is able to ſtruggle through the deep Arrangement of Shades. All is *pitchy Darkneſs*, without

without one enlivening Ray. How ſolemn! How awful! 'Tis like the Return of Chaos, or the Shroud of Nature. I don't wonder that it is the Parent of Terrors, and ſo apt to ingender Fear. Lately, the Tempeſt marked it's rapid Way with Miſchief; now, the Night dreſſes her ſilent Pavilion with Horror.

I HAVE *ſometimes* left the beaming Tapers, withdrawn from the ruddy Fire, and plunged into the thickeſt of theſe ſooty Shades: not in the leaſt regretting the Change, but rather exulting in it, as a welcome Deliverance. The very Gloom was pleaſing, was exhilarating, compared with the Converſation, I quitted. The Speech of my *Companions* (How does it grieve me, that I ſhould *even once* have Occaſion to call them by *that* Name!) was the Language of Darkneſs: was Horror to the Soul, and Torture to the Ear *.——Alas! that I ſhould have room

* What has been ſaid, I aſk'd my Soul, what done?
How flow'd our Mirth? or whence the Source begun?
Perhaps, the Jeſt, that charm'd the ſprightly Croud,
And made the jovial Table laugh ſo loud,
To ſome *falſe* Notion ow'd its poor Pretence,
To an ambiguous Word's perverted Senſe;
To a wild Sonnet, or a wanton Air,
Offence and Torture to the ſober Ear.
Perhaps, alas! the pleaſing Stream was brought
From this Man's Error, from another's Fault;
From Topics, which Good-nature would forget,
And *Prudence* mention with the laſt Regret.
PRIOR's *Solomon.*

room to make the Reflection! May I never be under a *Neceſſity* of repeating it! Their Tongues were dipt in the Venom of Aſps: "their Throat is an open Sepulchre;" cruel to their Neighbour's Character, as the Grave; and inſatiable in *ſlanderous* Aſſaſſinations, as the Grave in devouring her Prey. Sometimes, their liccentious and ungovernable Diſcourſe, ſhot Arrows of *Profaneneſs* againſt Heaven itſelf; and, in proud Defiance, challenged the Reſentment of Omnipotence. Sometimes, as if it was the Glory of human Nature, to ſhare and cheriſh ſome of the *groſſeſt* Appetites of the Brute; and the Mark of a Gentleman, to have ſerved an Apprenticeſhip in a Brothel; the filthieſt Jeſts of the Stews (if low *Obſcenity* can be a Jeſt) were nauſeouſly obtruded on the Company, till all the *Modeſt* Part of it was expell'd: while the other beſotted Creatures laughed aloud, though the Leproſy of Uncleanneſs appeared on their Lips. — Are not theſe Perſons *Priſoners* of *Darkneſs*; tho' blazing Sconces, pour artificial Day through their Rooms? Are not their Souls immured in the moſt baleful Shades; though the Noon-tide Sun is brightened, by flaming on their gilded Chariots? They diſcern not that great and adorable Being, who fills the Univerſe with his infinite and glorious Preſence: who is all Eye,

to

to obſerve their Actions; all Ear, to hear their Words. They know not the all-ſufficient Redeemer, nor the unſpeakable Bleſſedneſs of his heavenly Kingdom. They are groping for the Prize of Happineſs; but will certainly graſp the Thorn of Anxiety. They are wantonly ſporting on the Brink of that Precipice; from whence, in a Moment, they may fall headlong into *irretrievable* Ruin, and *endleſs* Deſpair.

THEY have forc'd me out, and are, perhaps, deriding me in my Abſence: are charging my Reverence for my Maker, and *real* Senſe of the *Excellency* of the RATIONAL Nature, to the Account of Humour and Singularity; Narrowneſs of Thought, or Sourneſs of Temper.—But be it ſo.——I will indulge no Indignation againſt Them; and, if any thing like it *ſhould* ariſe, I will convert it into Prayer—— "Pity "Them, Oh Thou Father of Mercies!—Shew "them the Madneſs of their Profaneneſs—Shew "them the Baſeneſs of their vile Ribaldry—— "Let them be dumb, in ſilent Shame and "Confuſion; till they open their Lips, to adore "thine *inſulted* Majeſty——to implore thy Par-"don—and humbly devote to Thee, thoſe ſo-"cial Hours, thoſe injured Faculties; which "they are now abuſing, to thy Diſhonour; to "their own mutual Contamination; and (unleſs

" timely Repentance intervene) to their com-
" mon Infamy, and final Perdition."

I RIDE home amidſt the gloomy Void: all darkling and ſolitary, I can ſcarce diſcern my Horſe's Head; and only gueſs out my blind Road. *No Companion*, but Danger; or, perhaps, " Deſtruction ready at my Side *."—But, why do I fancy myſelf ſolitary? Is not the Father of Lights; the GOD of my Life; the great and everlaſting Friend; always at my Right Hand? Becauſe the Day is excluded, is his Omnipreſence vacated? Though I have no earthly Acquaintance near, to aſſiſt in caſe of a Misfortune; or to beguile the Time, and divert uneaſy Suſpicions, by entertaining Conferences: May I not lay my Help upon the Almighty, and converſe with GOD by humble Supplication? For this Exerciſe, no Place is improper; no Hour unſeaſonable; and no Poſture incommodious. This is Society, the beſt of Society, even in Solitude. This is a Fund of Delights, eaſily portable, and quite inexhauſtible. A Treaſure this, of unknown Value; and liable to no Hazard, from Wrong or Robbery; but perfectly ſecure to the lonely Wanderer, in the moſt darkſome Paths.

AND why ſhould I diſtreſs myſelf with *Apprehenſions* of *Peril?* This Acceſs to GOD, is not only

* Job xviii. 12.

only an indefeaſible Privilege, but a kind of ambulatory Gariſon. Thoſe, that make known their Requeſts unto GOD, and rely upon his protecting Care; He gives his Angels Charge over their Welfare. His Angels are commiſſioned, to eſcort them in their Travelling; and to hold up their Goings, that they daſh not their Foot againſt a Stone. Nay, He Himſelf condeſcends to be their Guardian, and "keeps all "their Bones, ſo that not one of them is bro-"ken." They are, according to the Certificate of Revelation, "in League with the "Stones of the Field *." Though they fall headlong on the Flints, even the Flints, fitted to fracture the Skull, ſhall receive them as into the Arms of Friendſhip; and not offer to hurt, whom the LORD is pleaſed to preſerve.

MAY I then enjoy the Preſence of this gracious GOD; and Darkneſs and Light ſhall be both alike. Let HIM whiſper Peace to my Conſcience; and this dread Silence ſhall be more charming, than the Voice of Eloquence, or the Strains of Muſic. Let HIM reveal his raviſhing Perfections in my Soul; and I ſhall not want the Saffron Beauties of the Morn, the golden Glories of Noon, or the impurpled Evening Sky. I ſhall ſigh only for thoſe moſt deſirable and diſtinguiſhed Realms; where, the Light of HIS Countenance,

* Job v. 23.

Countenance *perpetually* ſhines, and conſequently—" there is * no Night there."

How ſurpriſing are the Alterations of Nature! I left her, the preceding Evening, plain and unadorned. But, now, a *thick Rime* has ſhed it's hoary Honours over all. It has ſhagged the Fleeces of the Sheep, and criſped the Traveller's Locks. The Hedges are richly fringed, and all the Ground profuſely powdered. The downward Branches are taſſeled with Silver, and the upright are feathered with the plumy Wave.

BUT, the *Fine*, are not always the *Valuable*. The Air, amidſt all theſe gaudy Decorations, is charged with chilling and *unwholſome* Damps. The hazy Influence ſpreads wide; ſits deep; hangs heavy and oppreſſive on the Springs of Life. A liſtleſs Languor clogs the animal Functions; and the purple Stream glides but faintly thro' it's Chanels. In vain, the Ruler of the Day exerts his beaming Powers: In vain, He attempts to diſperſe this Inſurrection of Vapours. The ſullen, malignant Cloud refuſes to depart. It envelops the World, and *intercepts* the *Proſpect*. I look abroad for the neighbouring Village; I ſend my Eye in queſt of the riſing Turret; but, am ſcarce able to diſcern the very next Houſe. Where are the blue Arches of

* Rev. xxi. 25.

Heaven; where the radiant Countenance of the Sun; where the boundleſs Scenes of Creation? Loſt, loſt are their Beauties; quenched their Glories. The thronged Theatre of the Univerſe, ſeems an empty Void; and all it's elegant Pictures, an undiſtinguiſhed Blank.—— Thus would it have been with our intellectual Views, if the *Goſpel* had not come in to our Relief. We ſhould have known neither our true Good, nor real Evil. We had been a Riddle to ourſelves; the preſent State all Confuſion, and the future impenetrable Darkneſs. But, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ariſing with potent and triumphant Beams, has diſſipated the interpoſing Cloud; and opened a Proſpect, more beautiful, than the Bloſſoms of Spring; more chearing, than the Treaſures of Autumn; more enlarged, than the Extent of the viſible Syſtem: which, having led the Eye of the Mind, thro' Fields of Grace, over Rivers of Righteouſneſs, and Hills crowned with Knowledge; terminates, at length, in the Heavens; ſweetly loſing itſelf, in Regions of infinite Bliſs, and endleſs Glory.

As I walk along the Fog, it ſeems, at ſome little Diſtance, to be almoſt ſolid Gloom; ſuch as would ſhut out every Glimpſe of Light, and totally impriſon me in Obſcurity. But, when I approach, and enter it; I find myſelf agreeably miſtaken, and the Miſt much *thinner*, than it *appeared*.

peared.——Such is the Caſe, with regard to the *Sufferings* of the preſent Life; they are not, when experienced, ſo dreadful, as a timorous Imagination ſurmiſed. Such alſo is the Caſe, with reference to the *Gratifications* of *Senſe*; they are not ſo ſubſtantial, as a ſanguine Expectation repreſented. In both Inſtances, we are graciouſly diſappointed: the Edge of the Calamity is blunted, that it may not wound us with incurable Anguiſh: the exquiſite Reliſh of the Proſperity is palled, that it may not captivate our Affections, and enſlave them to inferior Delights.

SOMETIMES, the Face of Things wears a more pleaſing Form; the very Reverſe of the foregoing. The ſober Evening advances, to cloſe the ſhort-lived Day. The Firmament, clear and unſullied, puts on it's brighteſt Blue. The Stars, in thronging Multitudes, and with a peculiar Brilliancy, glitter thro' the fair Expanſe. While the *Froſt* pours it's ſubtle and penetrating Influence, all around. Sharp and intenſely keen, all the long Night, the rigid Æther continues it's Operations. When late, and ſlow, the Morning opens her pale Eye; in what a curious and amuſing Diſguiſe, is Nature dreſſed! The Icicles, jagged, and uneven, are pendent on the Houſes. A whitiſh Film incruſts the Windows, where mimic Landſchapes riſe, and fancied Figures

ſwell. The fruitful Fields are hardened to Iron; the moiſtened Meadows are congealed to Marble; and both reſound (an Effect unknown before) with the Peaſant's haſty Tread. The Stream is arreſted in it's Career, and it's ever-flowing Surface chained to the Banks. The fluid Paths become a ſolid Road; where the finny Shoals were wont to rove, the ſportive Youth ſlide, or the rattling Chariots roll *. And (what would ſeem, to an Inhabitant of the Southern World, as unaccountable as the deepeſt Myſteries of Religion) that very ſame Breath of Heaven, which *cements* the Lakes into a cryſtal Pavement; *cleaves* the Oaks, as it were with inviſible Wedges: "*breaks* in Pieces the Northern Iron, "and the Steel;" even while it *builds* a Bridge of Icy Rock, over the Seas †.

THE Air is all Serenity. Refined by the nitrous Particles, it affords the moſt diſtinct Views, and

* Concreſcunt ſubito currenti in flumine cruſtæ;
Undaque jam tergo ferratos ſuſtinet orbes,
Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hoſpita plauſtris.
Æraque diſſiliunt vulgo. VIRG.

† Job xxxviii. 30. *The Waters are hid*, locked up from the Cattle's Lips, ſecured from the Fiſher's Nets, and concealed from the human Eye, *as* Wells are *with a* ponderous and impenetrable *Stone*. *And* not only Lakes and Rivers, but *the Surface of the* great and boundleſs *Deep*, with it's reſtleſs and uncontroulable Surges, *is taken captive* יתלכדו by the Froſt, and bound in ſhining Fetters.

and extenſive Proſpects. The Seeds of *Infection*, are killed, and the *Peſtilence* deſtroyed, even in Embryo. So, the Cold of *Affliction* tends to mortify our Corruptions, and ſubdue our vitious Habits.—The crouding Atmoſphere conſtringes our Bodies, and braces our Nerves. The Spirits are buoyant, and ſally briſkly on the Execution of their Office. Had we been under ſuch unclouded Skies, and ſo bright a Sun, in the Summer Months; we ſhould have been melted with Heat, and ſoftened into Supineneſs: been ready to ſtretch our Limbs under the ſpreading Beach, and lie at Eaſe by the murmuring Brook. But, now, none loiters in his Path; none is ſeen with folded Arms: all is in Motion; all is Activity; Choice, prompted by the Weather, ſupplies the Spur of Neceſſity. Thus, the *rugged* School of *Misfortune*, often trains up the Mind, to a lively Exertion of it's Faculties; the *keen* Climate of *Adverſity*, often inſpirits us with a manly Reſolution: when a ſoft and downy Affluence, perhaps, would have relaxed all the generous Spring of the Soul, and have left it enervated with Pleaſure, or diſſolved in Indolence.

"*COLD* cometh out of the North." The Winds, having ſwept thoſe Deſarts of Snow, arm themſelves with Millions of frozen Particles, and make a fierce Deſcent upon our Iſle. Under

black and ſcowling Clouds, they drive, dreadfully whizzing, through the darkened Air. They growl around our Houſes; aſſault our Doors; and, eager for Entrance, faſten on our Windows. Walls can ſcarce reſtrain them; Bars are unable to exclude them; through every Cranny they force their Way. Ice is on their Wings; they ſcatter Agues, through the Land; and Winter, all Winter, rages as they go. Their Breath is as a ſearing * Iron to the little Verdure, left in the Plains. Vaſtly more pernicious to the tender Plants than the ſharpeſt Knife; they not only kill their Branches, but wound the very Root. Let not the Corn venture far, from the Entrenchment of the Furrow; let not the fruit-bearing Bloſſoms dare to come abroad, from their Lodgment in the Bark; leſt theſe ſavage, murderous Blaſts, deſtroy the Hope of the advancing Year.

O 'TIS ſeverely cold! Who is ſo hardy, as not to ſhrink at this *exceſſively pinching* Weather? Every Face is pale. Even the blooming Cheeks contract a gelid Hue; and the Teeth hardly

* This, I ſuppoſe, is the Meaning of that figurative Expreſſion, uſed by the Prophet *Habakkuk*; who, ſpeaking of the *Chaldeans* invading *Judæa*, ſays——*Their Faces*, or the Incurſions they make, *ſhall ſup up*, ſhall ſwallow greedily, ſhall devour utterly, the Inhabitants of the Country, and their valuable Effects; *as the* keen, corroding Blaſts of the *Eaſt-Wind*, deſtroy every green Thing in the Field. *Hab.* i. 9.

hardly forbear chattering.—Ye that ſit eaſy and joyous, in your commodious Apartments, ſolacing yourſelves in the diffuſive Warmth of your Fire; be mindful of your Brethren, in the chearleſs Tenement of Poverty. *Their* ſhattered Panes, are open to the piercing Winds; a tattered Garment, ſcarcely covers their ſhivering Fleſh; while a few faint and dying Embers on the ſqualid Hearth, rather mock their Wiſhes, than warm their Limbs.——While the generous Juices of *Oporto*, ſparkle in your Glaſſes; or the Streams, beautifully tinged, and deliciouſly flavoured by the *Chineſe* Leaf, ſmoak in the elegant Porcelain: O remember, that many of your Fellow-Creatures, amidſt all the Rigour of theſe inclement Skies, are emaciated with Sickneſs; benumbed with Age; and pining with Hunger. Let "their Loins bleſs you," for comfortable Cloathing! ſupply them with Food, with Fewel, and baffle the raging Year. So, may you never know any of their Diſtreſſes, but only by the Hearing of the Ear; the Seeing of the Eye; or the Feeling of a tender Commiſeration! ——Methinks, the bitter bluſtering Winds plead for the poor Indigents: may they breathe Pity into *your* Breaſts! while they blow Hardſhips into *their* Huts.——Obſerve thoſe blue Flames, and ruddy Coals, in your Chimney: quickened by the Cold, they look more lively, and glow more ſtrongly. Silent, but ſeaſonable Admonition to

the gay Circle, that chat and ſmile around them! *Thus*, may your Hearts, at ſuch a Juncture of Need, kindle into a peculiar Benevolence! Detain not your ſuperfluous Piles of Wood. Let them haſten to the Relief of the ſtarving Family. Bid them expire in many a willing Blaze, to mitigate the Severity of the Seaſon, and chear the bleak Abodes of Want: So ſhall they aſcend, mingled with Thankſgivings to GOD, and ardent Prayers for your Welfare — aſcend, more grateful to Heaven, than curling Columns of the moſt coſtly Incenſe.

NOW the Winds ceaſe. Having brought their Load, they are diſmiſſed from Service. They have wafted an immenſe Cargo of Clouds, which empty themſelves in *Snow*. At firſt, a few ſcattered Shreds come wandering down the ſaddened Sky. This ſlight Skirmiſh, is ſucceeded by a general Onſet. The Flakes, large, and numerous, and thick-wavering, deſcend in a continual Flow. All Night, the fleecy Showers, in ſofteſt Silence, fall. In the Morning, when we awake, what a ſurpriſing Change appears! — Is this the ſame World? — Here is no Diverſity of Colour! I can hardly diſtinguiſh the Trees, from the Hills on which they grow. Where is the Difference between the Grounds, deſtined to the Plough; and thoſe, reſerved for Paſturage?

All

All Things lie blended in bright Confuſion. So bright, that it heightens the Splendor of Day, and even dazles the Organs of Sight. The Lawn is not ſo fair, as this ſnowy Mantle, which inveſts the Fields; and even the Lily, was the Lily to appear, would look tarniſhed in it's Preſence. I can think of but *one* Thing, which *excels*, or equals, this glittering Robe of Winter. Is any One deſirous to know what I mean? He may find it deſcribed, in that admirable Hymn *, compoſed by the Royal Penitent. Is any one deſirous to be poſſeſſed of, ſo valuable a Rarity? He will find it offered to his Acceptance, in every Page of the Goſpel.—See! (for the Eye cannot ſatisfy itſelf, without viewing again and again the curious, the delicate Scene) See! how the Hedges are habited, like ſpotleſs Veſtals: the Houſes are roofed, with Uniformity and Luſtre: the Meadows are covered, with a Carpet of the fineſt Ermine †: the Groves bow, beneath the lovely Burden: and all, all below, is one wide, immenſe, ſhining Waſte of White.

AMAZING are the Works of the great Creator, and prodigiouſly *various*. How pliant, and ductile, is Nature, under his forming Hand! At his

* Pſal. li. 7.

† This Animal is Milk-white; and ſo far is it from having *Spots*, that, as the Tradition goes, it will rather die, or be taken, than ſully it's Whiteneſs. *See* Chambers's *Dictionary*.

his Command, the ſelf-ſame Subſtance aſſumes the moſt different Shapes; and is transformed into an endleſs Multiplicity of Figures. If HE ordains, the Water is moulded into Hail, and diſcharged upon the Earth like a Volley of Shot; or, it is conſolidated into Ice, and defends the Rivers, "as it were with a Breaſt-plate." At the bare Intimation of his Will, the very ſame Element is ſcattered in Hoar-Froſt, like a Sprinkling of the moſt attenuated Aſhes; or, is ſpread over the Surface of the Ground, in theſe ſwelling Couches of deep and flaky Down.

THE Snow, however it may carry the Appearance of Cold, affords a *warm* Garment for the Corn; ſcreens it from nipping Froſts, and cheriſhes it's infant Growth. It will abide for awhile, to exert a protecting Care, and exerciſe a foſtering Influence. Then, touched by the Sun, or thawed by a ſoftening Gale; the furry Veſture, melts into genial Moiſture; ſinks deep into the Soil, and ſaturates it's Pores with the diſſolving Nitre: repleniſhing the Glebe with that vegetative Life, which will open into the Bloom of Spring, and ripen into the Fruits of Autumn.——Beautiful Emblem this, and comfortable Repreſentation, of the Efficacy of the divine Word: both in the ſucceſsful, and advantageous Iſſue, of it's Operation! "As the Rain "cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven,

" and returneth not thither, but watereth the
" Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud,
" that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread
" to the Eater: So ſhall my Word be, that
" goeth forth out of my Mouth: it ſhall not
" return unto me void, but ſhall accompliſh
" that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the
" Thing whereto I ſent it *."

NATURE, at length, puts off her lucid Veil. She drops it, in a trickling *Thaw*. The looſened Snow, rolls in Sheets from the Houſes. Various Openings ſpot the Hills; which, even while we look, become larger, and more numerous. The Trees rid themſelves, by Degrees, of the hoary Incumbrance. Shook from the ſpringing Boughs, Part falls heavy to the Ground, Part flies abroad in ſhining Atoms. Our Fields and Gardens, lately buried beneath the drifted Heaps, riſe plain and diſtinct to View.—— And, ſince we ſee Nature once again, has She no verdant Traces, no beautiful Features, left? They are, like real Friends, very rare; and therefore the more particularly to be regarded, the more highly to be valued.——Here and there, the *Holly* hangs out her glowing Berries; the *Lauruſtinus* ſpreads her graceful Tufts; and both, under a Covert of unfading Foliage.——The plain, but hardy *Ivy* cloathes the decrepit, crazy Wall; nor ſhrinks from the friendly Office, tho' the Skies frown, and

* Iſa. lv. 10, 11.

and the Storm roars.———The *Laurel*, firm, erect, and bold, expands it's Leaf of vivid Green. In ſpite of all the united, the repeated Attacks of Wind, and Rain, and Froſt, it preſerves an undiſmayed lively Look; and maintains it's Poſt, while withering Millions fall around. Worthy, by vanquiſhing the rugged Force of Winter, worthy to adorn the triumphant Conqueror's Brow.—Nor muſt I forget the *Bay-tree*; which ſcorns to be a mean Penſioner, on a few ſunny Gleams; or, with a ſervile Obſequiouſneſs, to vary it's Appearance, in Conformity to the changing Seaſons. By ſuch Indications of ſterling Worth, and ſtanch Reſolution, reading a Lecture, to the Poet's Genius; while it weaves the Chaplet, for his Temples.——*Theſe*, and a *few other* Plants, clad in native Verdure, retain their comely Aſpect, in the bleakeſt Climes, and coldeſt Months.

SUCH, and ſo durable, are the Accompliſhments of a *refined* Underſtanding, and an *amiable* Temper. The tawdry Ornaments of Dreſs, which catch the unthinking Vulgar, ſoon become inſipid and deſpicable. The rubied Lip, and the flushing Cheek, fade. Even the ſparkling Wit *, as

* "How little does GOD eſteem the Things that "Men count great; the Endowments of Wit and "Eloquence that *Men* admire in ſome! Alas! how "poor are they to Him! He reſpecteth not any "who

as well as the ſparkling Eye, pleaſe but for a Moment. But the virtuous Mind has Charms, which ſurvive the Decay of every inferior Embelliſhment; Charms, which add to the Fragrancy of the Flower, the *Permanency* of the *Ever-green*.

SUCH, likewiſe, is the *Happineſs* of the *ſincerely Religious*; like a Tree, ſays the inſpired Moraliſt,

" who are wiſe in Heart: they are nothing, and " leſs than nothing in his Eyes. Even wiſe *Men* " admire, how little it is that Men know, how " ſmall a Matter lies under the Sound of theſe " popular Wonders, a learned Man, a great Scholar, " a great Stateſman. How much more doth the " all-wiſe GOD meanly account of Theſe! He often " diſcovers, even to the World, their Meanneſs, " He *befools* them. So Valour, or Birth, or worldly " Greatneſs, theſe He gives, and gives as Things " He makes no great Reckoning of, to ſuch as ſhall " never ſee his Face; and calls to the Inheritance of " Glory poor deſpiſed Creatures, that are looked on " as the *Off-ſcourings*, and *Refuſe* of the World."

—*THUS* ſays an excellent Author; who writes with the moſt amiable Spirit of Benevolence; with the moſt unaffected Air of Humility; and, like the ſacred Originals, from which he copies, with a majeſtic Simplicity of Style.——Whoſe *ſelect Works* I may venture to recommend, not only as a Treaſure, but as a MINE, of genuine, ſterling, evangelical Piety.——See Page 520. of Archbiſhop LEIGHTON's ſelect Works, the *Edinburgh* Edition, Octavo: Which it is neceſſary to ſpecify, becauſe the *London* Edition does not contain that Part of his Writings, which has ſupplied me with the preceding *Quotation*.

Moraliſt, " whoſe Leaf ſhall not fall." He borrows not his Peace from external Circumſtances; but has a Fund within, and is " ſatisfied from " himſelf." Even though impoveriſhed by Misfortunes, He is rich in the Poſſeſſion of Grace, and richer in the Hope of Glory. His Joys are infinitely ſuperior to, as well as nobly independent on, the tranſitory Glow of ſenſual Delight, or the capricious Favours of, what the World calls, Fortune.

IF the *Snow* compoſes the light-armed Troops of the Sky, methinks the *Hail* conſtitutes it's heavy Artillery. When driven by a vehement Wind, with what dreadful Impetuoſity, does that ſtony Shower fall! How it rebounds from the frozen Ground, and rattles on the reſounding Dome! It attenuates the Rivers into Smoke, or ſcourges them into Foam. It cruſhes the infant Flowers; cuts in Pieces the Gardener's early Plants; and batters the feeble Fortification of his Glaſſes, into Shivers. It darts into the Traveller's Face: He turns, with Haſte, from the Stroke; or feels, on his Cheek, for the guſhing Blood: If he would retreat into the Houſe, it follows him even thither; and, like a determined Enemy, that puſhes the Purſuit, daſhes thro' the crackling Panes. But, the fierce Attack is quickly over. The Clouds have ſoon

ſpent

ſpent their Shafts; ſoon unſtrung their Bow. How happy for the Inhabitants of the Earth, that what is ſo dreadfully *furious*, ſhould be ſo remarkably *ſhort!* What elſe could endure the Shock, or eſcape Deſtruction?

BUT, behold a *Bow*, of no hoſtile Intention; a Bow, painted in variegated Colours, on the diſburdened Cloud. How vaſt is the Extent, how delicate the Texture, of that *ſhowery Arch!* It compaſſeth the Heavens, with a glorious Circle; and makes Us forget, the Horrors of the Storm. Elegant it's Form, and rich it's Tinctures; but more delightful it's ſacred Significancy. While the Violet, and the Roſe, bluſh in it's beautiful Aſpect; the Olive-branch ſmiles in it's gracious Import. It writes, in radiant Dyes, what the Angels ſung in harmonious Strains; "Peace on "Earth, and Good-will towards Men." It is the Stamp of *Inſurance*, for the continued Welfare of this preſent World; and a comfortable *Token* of a better State, and happier Kingdom:— a Kingdom, where a *Rainbow* is repreſented, as ſurrounding the Throne*; to intimate, that *there* Storms ſhall beat, and *Winter* pierce no more; but one unbounded *Spring* for ever, ever bloom.

* Rev. iv. 3.

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TABLE

OF THE

TEXTS *more* or *leſs* illuſtrated in this WORK.

N. B. *As Dr.* SHAW, *in the Supplement to his* Excellent *Book of Travels, and ſeveral other Writers of the* greateſt *Eminence, have given an Index of Scriptures, occaſionally Explain'd in their Writings; I doubt not but I ſhall oblige* many *of my Readers, by what I* here *ſubjoin; thoſe eſpecially, whoſe Taſte is happily formed to reliſh the Beauties of the ſacred Records.*

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